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MEMOIR

OF

Selina, Countess of Huntingdon.

COMPILED FROM AUTHENTIC DOCUMENTS.

BY THE

REV. ALFRED H. NEW,

Author of "The Voice of the Bible to the Age."

Revised Edition.

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PREFACE TO THE AMERICAN EDITION.

THE great events now in progress, render this new Life of Lady Huntingdon a timely re-publication. But, in issuing it from a Church press, some explanatory observations are deemed advisable.

It is hardly possible for us to conceive the spiritual state of England in 1735. The rulers of the Church were ignorant of the Gospel, and generally opposed to all measures for its revival, some from constitutional arrogance, others from worldliness and prejudice.

The nobility and upper classes were either utterly indifferent, or openly infidel. The rudeness and depravity of the common people answered in full to the picture of it drawn by Mr. Foster, in his Essay on "Popular Ignorance;" while the few zealous ones here and there, were, for the most part, walking in the moon-light Gospel of Mr. Law. One of this class was the mother of the Wesleys, whose experience, as described by the younger, may still be read upon her tomb in Bunhill Fields, though she came to the light at the eleventh hour:

> "True daughter of affliction, she,
> Inured to pain and misery,
> Wept a long night of grief and fears,
> A legal night of seventy years."

It is impossible to appreciate the subsequent history of religion without keeping these facts in view. Some might wish to see them suppressed, especially such delinquencies of high officers in the Church as occasionally appear in the following Memoir, and in every faithful history of the times. But this is neither wise nor necessary. Let the facts speak as in the impartial records of the apostolic and early churches. The church properly speaking is not responsible for them. Her standards were sound and pure, nor is it an unheard of thing that such standards should find their true representatives at a particular time, not in those who are in power, but in those who are in humbler stations. These facts convey wholesome lessons. They stand forth to vindicate the necessity and often the measures of succeeding reformations, and in the light of them only can subsequent history be fully understood.

Such was the state of religion throughout England when God raised up a new order of Evangelists such as the world has not seen since the first apostles of Christianity. They were nurtured in the bosom of the Established Church. In it and for it they opened their mission, and to it they were loyal in judgment and in feeling. They loved its doctrines, its discipline, and its worship. Let it now be put to vote in the Establishment itself whether the Chaplains of Lady Huntingdon, or Dr. Cornwallis and Bishop Lavington were the true churchmen of that day. We have lived to see the time when the highest dignitaries of the Church are contending in parliament for such "liberty of prophecying," as would have satisfied the revivalists—a liberty which it is now generally held to be not only impolitic but sinful to withhold: though there are not wanting men who will plead the letter of tyrannical laws to hinder Bishops and Archbishops themselves from evangelizing the masses by extra canonical services. These are the parties chargeable with the separations which ensued, and which they forced upon those who were the benefactors of the

Church and nation. They had no sympathy with the Dissenters, or with any others who were unfilial to the Church, though suffering so much from its unjust and infatuated rulers. In proof of this, the chief of those who ultimately were forced out, said, so late as 1766, "We are not Dissenters. We are not Seceders; nor do we bear any resemblance to them. We set out upon quite opposite principles. The Seceders laid the very foundation of their work in judging and condemning *others.* We laid the foundation of our work in judging and condemning *ourselves.* They begin everwhere with showing their hearers how fallen the *Church and ministers are.* We begin everywhere by showing our hearers how fallen they are *themselves.*"

The peculiar power of these reformers was in their intense and unquestionable love for the souls of their fellow-creatures, and in the fact that they preached the GOSPEL, which was then like a new revelation from heaven. And this solves the mystery of their treatment from its enemies; for this Gospel is ever an amazement, a scorn, and a riddle to the world and to the mere Churchman, when preached by such evangelists as Whitefield. Theirs was not the undefined and dreamy devoutness of the pietist school, the connection of which with the doctrines of Scripture was slender and precarious, and which the world allows to pass unchallenged; on the contrary, their preaching was a distinct and sharply defined announcement of the doctrines of grace, which employed without scruple the very terms in which they had been revealed by the Holy Ghost."

As to the separations which ensued, while we are not wise enough to pronounce upon the designs of Providence in allowing them, we think it must be evident now that the permanent usefulness and influence of Lady Huntingdon's chapels, (and as much may be said of the Wesleyans,) would have been far better secured had these separations not taken place. Whitefield, indeed, and many others, never had their allegiance to the Church severed, or as they said, at all weakened; and the same was true of the Countess herself; and a part of our design in the re-publication of her Life, is to acknowledge and claim her distinguished labours as being in, and of, and for the Church, while our models are the persecuted but still conforming evangelists, such as Venn, Berridge, Walker of Truro, Adam, Romaine, and their successors.

And this leads us to say that "the great awakening" has been too much connected in our minds with the men who, through undesired events, were separated from our own communion. These, from their peculiar talents, came more prominently into history, but they were, by no means, the exclusive originators of the work. Different minds, unknown to one another, were at the same time similarly affected towards the truth of the gospel. All were in the Church, and but very few of her own ministers, nothwithstanding their provocations, ever thought of separation. They loved the Church as the Reformers left it, and obeyed laws subsequently imposed, which they believed most injurious to the Church, and most unjust to her members, as the lesser evil. The names of the conformers have been less conspicuous, as they refused to head any parties; but they bore their full share with the "irregulars" in producing the most surprising moral revolution upon record, in which the nobility shared as well as the ignorant multitude. It is not denied that the Church was benefited by the structures external to it, which yet leaned against its walls; but the work of renovation was chiefly accomplished by the builders, who continued within, and who, under persecution, repaired in the night what thieves had broken down by day. Their work came with less of "observation," but it continued with historic succession in the Church of England, and there it now lives, and is pregnant with further consequences. It is a remarkable fact, acknowledged by observers from without, that the "succession" of the great revival is now found not among the Wesleyans, or Nonconformists of any name, but in the bosom of the National Church. With some abatement of its original fervors, it there survived and and still survives, with a growing influence which has removed innumerable abuses, and animated with new life every department of that Church which has now greater power for good than any other upon earth, which has reached and controlled the government in its connection therewith, and extended itself, through its missionaries, to the most distant nations. It is not pretended that there are now living any full representatives of that unrivalled dispensation of the Spirit. There are not. But it is not without a somewhat extended, and we trust impartial reading and observation, that we express the belief that the genius of the great revival of the eighteenth century is at this hour better represented in those who fill the sees of Canterbury, York, and London, than in the heads of the hierarchy which Wesley invented.

We may never have precisely the same demonstration again, but new revivals take new forms, as seems likely to be the case in the unprecedented religious interest now in progress; but as the last extended over thirty years, with little abatement, and was in other respects incomparably superior to any which had preceded it, in virtue of which every religious community holding the truth, has distanced the position which it held in 1740, by many a league, of which little reckoning has been had, so we trust that those which are to come, will be still more extensive and glorious; for the subjugation of the whole world to the Spirit of the Gospel, is yet to be accomplished. While sympathizing cordially in good, and evil, and blessings, which other churches experience, we rejoice with joy unspeakable over the progress of the Gospel in the Church of England. Two nations, indeed, are yet struggling in its womb—Jacob and Esau—but it cannot be doubtful which shall prevail. A great work for the truth in Europe, and throughout the Eastern world, is before that church. With her relative strength, as indicated in London, where she has church room for 375,000 hearers. while the Independents accommodate but 59,000, the Methodists 57,000, and the Romanists 35,000—she is called to it. With a majority of the bishops, and a body of eight or nine thousand ministers, who hold the truth, and public sentiment still more largely with them, sanguine hopes are entertained that a greater day of evangelic aggression throughout the British dominions, cannot be very far distant. THE LORD HASTEN IT IN HIS TIME.

JUNE, 1858.

NOTE.—A few Abbreviations in this Edition have been judged expedient.—*Editor.*

PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION.

For some years past, a regret has been very generally expressed, that there existed no concise and popular memoir of the Countess of Huntingdon. The excellent volumes of her *"Life and Times,"* were deemed too voluminous and costly for an extensive circulation, and not adapted to attract the general reader. Year after year, however, passed, without any thing being attempted to meet this pressing want; until, at the beginning of last year, the Author had the honour of being requested to prepare a volume to supply the deficiency. Several important documents, and a large mass of materials, were placed in his hands; which, with the published statements to which he has had access, have enabled him to compile the following chronological record of the Life of Lady Huntingdon. He has endeavoured to state impartially the views and opinions of the celebrated persons noticed in these pages; and has left the startling facts, here recorded, to produce their natural effect, without being tinged with any remarks of his own. He regrets that, at this distant period, he has been unable to discover many documents which would throw light upon certain stages of her Ladyship's career; and takes this opportunity of thanking those friends who have kindly assisted him with materials and advice.

As the life of the Countess extends over nearly the whole of the eighteenth century, this volume discloses much of the social and religious condition of England, during this interesting period. At the commencement of her career, the nation was overclouded with spiritual darkness; the voice of evangelical truth was nearly speechless; a rigid formality chilled the church; and every form of vice flourished. In these pages it will be seen, how God enkindled the light of divine truth, and raised up many champions, to revive the church, and evangelize the world; and how the Countess succeeded in blessing the extremes of society—the highest and the lowest, the richest and the poorest—and thus sent forth two streams of holy influences, which, at length, met in, and permeated the middle classes.

It is singular that the revivalists of this period were chiefly ministers and members of the Establishment; who would have made the Church of England powerful and popular in the land, but for the short-sighted bigotry, which cast out those who were conspicuous for piety and zeal. When the Countess first commenced her labours, she never dreamt of the possibility of her separation from the Church. She considered her ministers as her chaplains, and her students as evangelists; and it will be seen in this Memoir, how firmly she adhered to her prinples, until she was reduced to the dilemma of relinquishing her work, or separating from the Establishment. She chose the latter alternative; and endeavoured to carry out the spirit and doctrines of the English Church, more purely than she could have done, had she bowed to the decision of that relic of a bygone age—the ecclesiastical court. Her position justified her step; and the proceedings of the evangelical portion of the clergy, in the present day, silently honour her deeds by effecting *within* the pale of the Establishment, what she could effect only beyond it.

England is rapidly passing to a position, whence she will be able to appreciate the value of the labours of Lady Huntingdon. The more clearly the condition of the nation, in the last century is discerned, the more exalted will the character of her Ladyship appear. She was at least half a century before her times. The claims of the poor—the value of lay-agency—the importance of open-air preaching to bring the Gospel to the masses—the establishment of missions to the Heathen, and to the Jews—the necessity of popular education—and the blessedness of Christian union, and catholicity of spirit—were advocated by the Countess in an age, when the profession of such sentiments caused her to be branded as a "Methodist," treated as an "enthusiast," and to be cast out of the Establishment. Yet all of these things are now being advocated by the evangelical dignitaries of the Church of England, and are being carried out by the clergy! The poor have never received such attention from the Church as at the present day; the recent Bishop of Norwich, Dr. Hinds, in his farewell address to his clergy, urges upon them "the development of the principle, now more and more claiming to be recognized, that *laymen and clergymen must be fellow-workers* in the Church, if it is to accomplish all that is required of it at home and abroad." Open-air preaching, by distinguished clergymen, and even a learned bishop, is becoming common; Church Missionary Societies are flourishing; school-rooms for educating, and preaching to the poor, are being erected; and a liberal catholic spirit now happily prevails. Had the Countess, therefore, lived in these days, she would have found public feeling in favour of her plans; and instead of being maligned and persecuted, she would, doubtless, have been honoured and praised.

The example of Lady Huntingdon is, however, still needed to arouse and animate the Christian Church. Although there is much that is bright and prosperous in the religious condition of England, there is much that is dark and deadly. Error, either in the form of rationalism, or of a refined Popery, is secretly poisoning many fair districts; a spirit of indifference is creeping over the people; and a morbid taste is springing up, which readily turns from the Gospel to welcome any novelty in doctrine or practice. The times require the services of sincere, zealous, evangelical ministers and laymen, who shall be "instant in season and out of season" to win souls; and, like the illustrious Lady whose life is here recorded, shall consecrate every thing they possess to secure the extension of Christ's kingdom on earth. This volume is, therefore, sent forth with the prayer, that the perusal of it may stimulate many to imbibe the spirit, and emulate the piety, zeal, and devoted activity of Selina, Countess of Huntingdon.

A. H. N.

LEAMINGTON,
June 12th, 1857.

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Memoir of Lady Huntingdon.

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THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD.—THE SHIRLEY FAMILY.—STANTON HAROLD.—LADY SELINA SHIRLEY; HER CHILDHOOD; EARLY IMPRESSIONS; EDUCATION; APPEARANCE AT COURT.—MARRIAGE WITH LORD HUNTINGDON.—HIS FAMILY AND CHARACTER.—DONNINGTON PARK.—LADY BOUNTIFUL.—SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS.—STRUGGLES AFTER TRUTH.—ILLNESS OF THE COUNTESS.—THE DAWN OF LIGHT.

THE providence of God is no where more clearly manifested than in the history of the religion of Jesus Christ. The first establishment of Christianity was effected by displays of divine power and grace, which attracted universal attention, scattered the mists of ignorance and superstition, and collected a band of faithful followers around the standard of the cross. The infant church was shielded by heavenly protection, and rapidly increased in power and extent. The storms which rose against her only strengthened her vitality; and for a long time, the fierce trials through which she passed united the faithful more closely to Christ, and to each other. Even when clouds hung darkly over her, and the wicked raised a shout of triumph at her prostrate condition; the hand of God painted the bow of promise upon the threatening darkness, "Lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the world." Every season of difficulty called forth the appropriate agency by which it could be removed. Remarkable men were raised up adapted to the peculiar situation of the Church, and able to cope with the spirit of the times. When certain doctrines were obscured or denied, the champion came forth to direct particular attention to the truths which were hidden; when pompous rites and gorgeous ceremonies usurped the place of sincere and heart-felt worship, an intrepid reformer appeared to sweep away the popish mummeries which contaminated the Church: and when a death-like slumber fell upon her, and paralysed her efforts to evangelize the world, God stirred up in some noble breasts a burning love for the salvation of men, which soon created an excitement in the world, and led many to use extraordinary exertions to rescue sinners from destruction by bringing them to Christ. The interests of religion required the services of such men as Wycliffe, Huss, Luther, Calvin, and Knox, at the several epochs in which they lived; and the providence of God raised them up to effect a glorious reformation, and to give new life to the Church of Christ. Among those who were thus rendered conspicuous in the eighteenth century for the services they rendered to true religion, none shone more brightly than the illustrious lady whose life is here recorded.

Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, was descended from the ancient and honourable house of Shirley, which was as distinguished for the purity of its genealogy, traceable to the time of Edward the Confessor, as for the piety which adorned its most celebrated members. Her grandfather, Sir Robert Shirley, was created Viscount Tamworth and Earl Ferrars in 1711, by reason of his grandfather's marriage with the youngest daughter of Robert Devereux, the unfortunate Earl of Essex and the favourite of Queen Elizabeth. He married twice, and had a family of twenty-seven children. His second son, the father of Lady Huntingdon, was born June 22nd, 1677, and named Washington Shirley after his mother, the daughter and heiress of Lawrence Washington, Esq., of Caresden, Wiltshire. He succeeded to his father's titles in 1717; and was highly beloved for the integrity of his conduct, the benevolence of his disposition, the affability of his manners, and the impartiality of his judgment. He married Mary, the eldest daughter of Sir Richard Levinge, a distinguished ornament of the English bar; by whom he had three daughters: Elizabeth, afterwards Lady E. Nightingale, to whom the celebrated monument in Westminster Abbey was erected; Selina, Countess of Huntingdon; and Mary, Viscountess Kilmorey.

Lady Selina Shirley, the second daughter of Washington Shirley, was born at Stanton Harold, for many years the seat of the Shirley family, on the 24th of August 1707. The mansion was most delightfully situated in a fine park of one hundred and fifty acres, which was well wooded, and diversified by hill and dale. It stood midway between the ancient town of Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Donnington Park, the residence of the Earl of Huntingdon; and was rendered conspicuous by the massive structure of the edifice, and the noble apartments it contained. The grounds were laid out with great taste and care; a spacious lake of ornamental water gave increased beauty to the sweeping lawn, and reflected on its surface a handsome stone bridge which was thrown across it. Adjoining the house was a church or chapel, which consisted of a nave, aisles, chancel, and tower; and within it are some monuments with long inscriptions, which commemorate the names, titles, and characters of the members of the Shirley family there interred. This was the spot which witnessed the development of the body and mind of Lady Selina.

She inherited the talents and benevolent disposition of her father, and from a very early age manifested great seriousness of mind. When she was nine years old, she saw the corpse of a young person about her own age carried to its last resting place. She followed it to the grave, and listened to the impressive service read over the body. Her mind was deeply affected with the thought of a future world; her heart was filled with sad and painful feelings; the tears rolled down her little cheeks; and she fervently prayed that, when God should be pleased to take her away, he would deliver her from all her fears, and give her a happy departure. The influence of that event was long after felt. She often retired to the lonely church-yard to visit the grave, and to revive the thoughts and feelings she had at first experienced. These feelings were still further deepened by the death of her grandfather Dec. 25, 1717, which naturally cast a gloom over the family circle. Her sensitive mind was keenly affected by every little trouble; and she frequently entered into a closet, where she could remain unobserved, and unburdened her heart in earnest prayer to God. Though in her early years she had no clear views of the distinctive doctrines of the gospel, she felt great relief in prayer; and rejoiced in being able to make known her requests to the Lord. She sought divine direction in all that she did; and as she grew up to womanhood, she earnestly prayed that she might marry into a serious family, where she would be preserved from the temptations peculiar to her station.

Her education was directed with the view to fit her for the high position in which she moved; and successfully drew out the talents of her mind, the disposition of her heart, and the graceful deportment of her manners. At a tender age she exhibited the dawn of those excellencies, for which she was afterwards so distinguished; and gave the promise of becoming, if her life were spared, a useful and valuable member of noble society. Her acquirements were much beyond the ordinary standard of the age in which she lived. She possessed a highly intelligent mind, an extraordinary quickness of apprehension, a brilliant fancy, a retentive memory, a strong clear understanding, and a sound judgment, which was improved by reading, conversation, observation, and reflection. Her position gave her many opportunities of gaining a general knowledge of mankind; and she early evinced great ability in penetrating into the character of those with whom she came in contact. Her countenance grew more engaging with the development of her mental powers. She was not what would be termed a beauty; yet there was a grace, a sweetness, about her features, when lit up with benevolence and the ardent workings of her spirit, which fully compensated for the absence of more perishable charms. Her person was noble and commanding; her eyes were large and lustrous; her nose slightly aquiline; her lips well-formed and expressive; her forehead bold and intellectual. There was a serene tranquility, sometimes shaded with a tinge of sadness, depicted on her countenance, which was rarely disturbed by outward events.

When she was introduced to the world, and made her appearance at court, she manifested no inclination to follow the example of her companions in the gaieties of fashionable life. She mingled with them in their amusements, and appeared in the splendid assemblies, which met at Kensington; but she was free from the vanity, pride, and still greater foibles, which at that period characterized too many of the ladies of the court. She loved to retire to some secluded spot, where she could read the word of God: she was constantly impressed with the thought of a future world; and the habitual realization of divine things gave a seriousness to her conduct, which preserved her amid scenes of great danger.

On June 3rd, 1728, Lady Selina Shirley was united in marriage to Theophilus, the ninth Earl of Huntingdon. The ancient dignity of the House of Hastings might have excited the ambition of many an heiress; but the strict decorum and outward propriety, which she observed and mistook for religion, were far more grateful to her than riches or renown: and she recognised in her marriage with the head of that house the answer to her many prayers that she might marry into a serious family. The Hastings family had been distinguished by their connexion with royalty, their talents, and their piety. The unfortunate Mary, Queen of Scots, was for some time confided to the keeping of the Earl of Huntingdon; and King James the First and his Consort were often visitors at the famous Castle of Ashby. Lord Hastings, the uncle of Theophilus, was a nobleman of great learning, and of a benevolent disposition. The House of Hastings has also produced many bright examples of religious women, who consecrated their time and talents to the service of God.

Theophilus, ninth Earl of Huntingdon, was the eldest son of Theophilus, seventh Earl, by his second marriage; and was born at Donnington Park, Leicestershire, Nov. 12, 1696. He succeeded his half-brother George, eighth Earl, Feb. 22, 1705. He passed a considerable portion of his time in Italy and France, and finished his travels with a tour in Spain, which, in that day, was regarded as a courageous enterprise. He carried with him abroad a good stock of learning, which he had acquired at Oxford, under the care of his tutor Dr. Benson; and brought it back improved with a thorough knowledge of men and manners. There he became tolerably perfect in the best modern languages, and their classic literature; and returned with "a taste as elegant, and a judgment as sound, as perhaps any man in Europe." He was thoroughly acquainted with the history and constitution of his own country; and had his modesty and love of retirement permitted him to engage in the bustling busy world, none would have appeared in the senate or cabinet with more wisdom, or with more fortitude. He was rarely seen in any public capacity, though he carried the sword of state at the coronation of George II; he sought his enjoyment in his home, and in scattering blessings in his private paths. His birth, eminent as it was, reflected much less honour upon his abilities, than his abilities did upon his birth; for his natural and acquired talents were such as might have raised him to the highest rank of men, had fortune placed him in the lowest.

Such was the noble Earl to whom Lady Selina Shirley was united by the "sweet and sacred tie of love." He well knew how to value the treasure which Providence had given him in a woman of such merit and amiable qualities; and he accordingly made it his study to repay the felicity with which she crowned his life. He loved her with a warm and devoted attachment, and considered her as the greatest addition to his earthly happiness; and from the period of his marriage to the day of his death he maintained his character as an attentive and affectionate husband. His esteem and love for her increased with time; and he frequently declared that her life and actions rendered even virtue more lovely, and her society and conversation constituted his greatest happiness. Nor could any one have been happier than she was in her husband. The more she knew him, the stronger she loved him; she reared a noble tablet to him at his decease; his image was never effaced from her heart; her highest respect and veneration were paid to his memory: and but a short time before her death, the tears which she shed at the mention of his name, indicated the strong hold he still retained on her affection.

Lady Huntingdon now took up her residence at the favourite seat of the Earl, at Donnington Park. The ancient mansion was then situated in the midst of a park which abounded with fine old majestic oaks, and other forest trees. The grounds were diversified by rising hills and sweeping valleys; and near the northern extremity, were broken into craggy precipices with hanging woods, which gave a wild and romantic feature to the scenery.

The situation of Lady Huntingdon was congenial to her feelings and desires. She often visited the court, where her position was high and influential, and received the marked attention of King George; but her heart was by no means at ease when surrounded by the gay and the frivolous. Her station required her to visit the higher circles, and to mingle with the fashionable world; yet the seriousness of her mind kept her from participating in the follies of the great, and deriving any real pleasure from the gaieties of life. She rejoiced when the season came that she might return to the quiet seclusion of Donnington Park, and gratify her benevolence by her pious deeds. She took a deep interest in the welfare of her neighbours and dependents. She entered the abodes of poverty, and enriched the inmates with her charities. Often might she be seen standing over the sick and the dying, administering to their temporal wants, and reading to them the sacred Scriptures. Many were the benedictions which her good deeds drew from those whom she had benefited; and she was called "Lady Bountiful" by the grateful recipients of her favours. To her now might be applied the character which was afterwards written under the name of Aspasia in the forty-second number of the Tatler. "Methinks I now see her walking in her garden, like our first parent, with unaffected charms, before beauty had spectators; and bearing celestial conscious virtue in her aspect. Her countenance is the lively picture of her mind, which is the seat of honour, truth, compassion, knowledge, and innocence. In the midst of the most ample fortune, and veneration of all that behold and know her, without the least affectation, she consults retirement, the contemplation of her own being, and that Supreme Power which bestowed it. Without the learning of schools, or the knowledge of a long course of arguments, she goes on in a steady course of uninterrupted piety and virtue; and adds to the severity and privacy of the last age, all the freedom and ease of this. The language and mien of a court she is possessed of in the highest degree; but the simplicity and humble thoughts of a cottage are her more welcome entertainments. Aspasia is a female philosopher, who does not only live up to the resignation of the most retired lives of the ancient sages, but also to the schemes and plans which they thought beautiful, though inimitable. This lady is the most exact economist, without appearing busy; the most strictly virtuous, without taking the praise of it: and shuns applause with as much industry as others do reproach."

Lady Huntingdon was at this period an utter stranger to the spiritual character of the gospel of Christ. She saw not the depravity of the human heart, as she afterwards discerned it; she knew nothing of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ, and of the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit; and had not yet experienced that peace of mind which passeth all understanding, and that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory. She afterwards felt and declared that she was now aiming to establish her own righteousness, and endeavouring by prayer, fasting, and alms-deeds, to recommend herself to the favour of Heaven. She entertained high opinions respecting the dignity of human nature; and aspired to reach, by her own works, the lofty standard she had placed before her. She strove after moral perfection, and shaped her conduct by the principles she had imbibed. It cannot be wondered at, that she surpassed her equals by birth, and the multitudes around her. She was a strict observer of her duties in the various relations of life; rigidly just in her dealings, and true to her word. She was liberal in her sentiments, prudent in her conduct, courteous in her deportment, and profuse in her charities. Truth found in her a diligent student; virtue, a most strenuous advocate; the Scriptures, a devout and prayerful reader; and public worship, a regular and constant attendant. Her moral accomplishments were so many and so distinguished, that she was admired by the world; and looked down upon herself with self-complacency, as superior in virtue, and eminent piety to those around her.

Nor was Lady Huntingdon at all singular in cherishing such feelings in her heart. There is nothing more grateful to our pride, than to indulge in lofty conceptions of human nature. It flatters our vanity to imagine that we are able to recommend ourselves to God by our good deeds. The men of the world would much rather work out a righteousness of their own, than receive the righteousness of Christ. They take their stand on the merit of their good works, and trust that it will avail for their justification with God. They have erroneous conceptions of themselves, of the position they sustain towards God, the consequences their sins have entailed, and the nature of Christ's mediatorial work. One conviction takes possession of their mind,—that something must be *done* by them; and aroused by the hope of gaining peace, joy, and heaven, they diligently endeavour to work out their own salvation. They are never successful. Hope may buoy them up for a time, but "hope deferred maketh the heart sick." The satisfaction they seek after rarely comes; for though they may pursue their course for many years, and may mistake self-complacency for divine approbation and insensibility for peace, they can never "rejoice in hope of the glory of God" until their minds have been enlightened by heavenly wisdom, and their hearts changed by divine grace,—until they have been "created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works."

Lady Huntingdon was far from enjoying the happiness which she had anticipated would result from her pious endeavours; and she redoubled her exertions to procure the favour of the Most High. Her sister-in-law Lady Margaret Hastings had been awakened to see the truth, and often conversed with her respecting the concerns of her soul. The joy and happiness she experienced formed a strange contrast to the state of Lady Huntingdon's mind, who soon perceived that she had not realized what she had been vainly striving after. The peace of mind which flows from faith in Christ had not entered her heart; she felt that she was unworthy to appear before God, that her best deeds were not sufficient to establish her righteousness, and that pride and self-satisfaction had mingled with all her thoughts and feelings. The discovery of her sinfulness greatly harassed her, and her mind was filled with the most distressing doubts. Again she strove to conquer her evil nature by rigorous austerities, and more self-denying labours; but the harder she sought to work out her own justification, the more she became convinced of her inability to accomplish the task.

A dangerous illness soon laid the Countess low, and brought her to the confines of the grave. Her strength was completely prostrated; her mind was dark and desponding; the fear of death fell upon her; and her conscience greatly distressed her. She looked back on her past career, but could not linger on a single portion of it with satisfaction. Her former deeds were stripped of the charm they once had; the piety, virtue, and morality, in which she had trusted, appeared to her tainted with sin; she perceived that she had been ignorant of her own character, had been building her hopes on imaginary foundations, and had been satisfied with a mere visionary happiness which a single ray of light had dispelled. Her mind was deeply affected with the thought of God's holy nature; she dreaded the idea of standing in his presence to render an account of her deeds; her heart appeared full of sin and deceit; her condemnation was the only sound which fell upon her ears; she recoiled from the certainty of a dark and dreadful eternity; and she saw no hope of escape from the punishment threatened by the law. God, however, had been preparing the way for light to be brought to her desponding soul. A powerful religious movement had been commenced, which created great excitement abroad; the report of the singular preaching of the Methodists reached Donnington Park; the truth impressed some members of the Hastings family; and through them, Lady Huntingdon was directed to the only source whence she could obtain peace and joy. To the delineation of these events we must next proceed.

CHAPTER II. A. D. 1738—1739.

THE SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS CONDITION OF ENGLAND.—RISE OF METHODISM AT OXFORD.—JOHN WESLEY.—GEORGE WHITEFIELD.—THE STARTLING LABOURS OF THE METHODISTS.—PROVINCE OF GEORGIA.—WHITEFIELD'S PREACHING.—LORD HUNTINGDON'S SISTERS CONVERTED THROUGH MR. INGHAM.—THE COUNTESS ENJOYS PEACE.—OPPOSITION OF THE WORLD.—DR. BENSON.—DR. SOUTHEY.—THE COURT CIRCLE.—FETTER LANE CHAPEL.—THE NOBILITY FLOCK TO WHITEFIELD THROUGH LADY HUNTINGDON'S INFLUENCE.

THE domestic condition of England had been for some time past in a very unsatisfactory state. A spirit of indifference had crept over the various sections of the Christian Church, and the people were left to the mercy of designing men. An inordinate thirst for wealth was manifested by all parties, and the most extravagant visions floated before the eyes of the people. Bubbles were easily blown to catch the rapacious spirit of the age. All the distinctions of party, religion, sex, character, and circumstances melted before the rage for gold. Exchange-alley was filled with a strange concourse of statesmen and clergymen, churchmen and dissenters, whigs and tories, physicians, lawyers, tradesmen, and even with multitudes of women. The effect was highly injurious to morals and religion. Robbers, assassins, and incendiaries infested every part of the country; acts of ferocious brutality were openly committed; letters were circulated demanding money from individuals, and threatening to fire their houses if the demand were refused; and the greatest alarm and terror pervaded all classes. Luxury vice, and profligacy increased to a woeful extent. The fortunate speculators indulged themselves in the richest dainties, and the most splendid equipages. They were intoxicated with pride and vain-glory; they gave unbridled license to their passions, scoffed at religion and morality, and set an example which was but too easily imitated by the majority of the people.

The influence of the Church was by no means calculated to stem the torrent of ungodliness. In the Establishment, the high dignitaries were more eager to secure power and emolument than to rescue the people from sin. A cold morality and a withering Arminianism had usurped the place of evangelical religion; the sermons were sedatives, and never touched the conscience; and the flocks were uncared for, and exposed to the attacks of evil. Infidelity was every where rampant. The press teemed with deistical works: wit, satire, and poetry lent their charms to foster profligacy of manners; and to such an extent had this proceeded that a bill was introduced into the House of Lords in 1721, for the suppression of blasphemy and profaneness, which, after a long and stormy debate, was rejected by a large majority. The state of religion among the dissenting communities was scarcely more favourable. A worldly spirit had blighted the piety for which they were once conspicuous; and they shared in the surrounding contagion. The congregations of many chapels had dwindled away under the repulsive errors of Socinianism; the spirit and life of the old Puritans were nearly extinct; and a cold formality appeared equally in the meeting house, and in the parish church. It is true there were a few men in each community who were filled with Evangelical truth and holy zeal; but the very prominence they gained only indicated the darkness which was spread over the people. A light, however, was silently being prepared, which soon was to burst upon the nation, struggle with the surrounding darkness, and enkindle the flame of true religion.

In November 1729, four young men at Oxford university formed themselves into a society; and agreed to meet several evenings in the week to read the Greek New Testament, and to promote their spiritual concerns; among whom were John and Charles Wesley, who afterwards gained great noteriety as the leaders of the Arminian section of Methodism. They entered into solemn engagements to lead holier and more self-denying lives; they read the scriptures, prayed, and fasted with great diligence; went to the sacrament every Lord's day; and were gradually led to see the truth as it is in Jesus. Their zeal increased with the clearness of their apprehension of divine things; they strengthened each others' piety and love; visited the prisoners in the goal, and instructed them in religion: devoted two or three hours a week to the poor and sick around, and denied themselves the comforts of life that they might be able to minister to the wants of the needy. Their self-sacrificing efforts provoked the hostility of the college authorities; they were branded as Methodists, and treated as enthusiasts; but all the opposition they met with could not quench the ardour of their zeal. In 1732, the society was increased to fifteen persons: and among them were Mr. Ingham, who afterwards became the brother-in-law of Lord Huntingdon; Mr. Hervey, the renowned author of the "Meditations;" and that remarkable man, who for many years was chaplain to the Countess, and the great leader of the Calvinistic Methodists.

George Whitefield was the youngest son of an innkeeper at Gloucester, and was born Dec. 16th, 1714. He received a good education in his youth, and gained loud applause at St. Mary's grammer school in his native city for his graceful elocution and good memory, which enabled him to pronounce the recitations before the corporation with great effect. At the age of fifteen, he left school to assist his mother at the inn; where he fostered the religious impressions he had early received, and composed two sermons which he dedicated to his brother. The inn passed into the hands of his eldest brother; and George after a time left it, and again lived with his mother. His heart was fixed on a residence at Oxford; but his scanty means forbade him to hope for its realization. One day, however, an Oxford student, a servitor of Pembroke College, visited his mother, and related how he had just cleared his expenses there by his services. "This will do for my son," exclaimed the gladdened mother, and turning to George, said, "Will you go to Oxford?" "With all my heart," he replied. Application was made to some friends who promised to assist him; he returned to the grammar school, and prepared himself for the university; and in his eighteenth year set out for Pembroke College, which he entered as a servitor. He was quickly surrounded by the gay and the thoughtless: but being shocked by their impiety and immorality, he strenuously avoided their society: and by his diligence, learning, and obliging disposition, he gained many friends. Soon after he had taken up his residence at Oxford, he heard of the young men who were branded as Methodists, and desired to join them: but his diffidence kept him aloof, until Charles Wesley introduced him to the little band. Whitefield not only conformed to the rules of the society, but far exceeded his companions in bodily austerities. His anxiety for salvation led him to shut himself up in his study, to fast and to pray, till he became so weak that he could scarcely walk. "When I knelt down," he says, "I felt great pressures both on soul and body, and have often prayed under the weight of them till the sweat came through me. Whole days and weeks have I spent, lying prostrate on the ground, in silent and vocal prayer." At length he was led to see the truth in Christ, which filled his soul with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

These devoted young men soon commenced preaching the truths which had impressed and gladdened their own souls. John Wesley for a short time served his father in the parish church at Epworth: and then returned to Oxford that he might encourage the society, and imbue his pupils with religious fervour. A new sphere of labour, however, now invited his serious attention. In 1732, a colony was founded in North America by a private company, which received the name of Georgia, in honor of King George II. General Oglethorpe was appointed Governor, who, in 1733, established the town of Savannah. The trustees were anxious to procure proper persons to preach the gospel to the colonists, and to the surrounding heathen. John Wesley and his friends were applied to; and after much prayer and consultation, he consented to leave his native land, and enter upon the wide American field thrown open to him. On the 14th of October, 1735, John Wesley, his brother Charles, and Mr. Ingham, who had been ordained by Dr. Potter, bishop of Oxford, embarked for Georgia, and safely landed February 6th, 1736. Their success was not equal to their expectations, probably because they were too sanguine; still, they prepared the way for the energetic labours of Whitefield, and the missionaries which Lady Huntingdon afterwards sent out. They became acquainted with the Moravian brethren, who produced such a favorable impression as to give a direction and tone to the early efforts of the Methodists. Mr. Ingham preached to the Indians, founded schools, and composed an Indian grammer for their use; and returned to England in the latter end of 1736. Mr. Charles Wesley sailed to procure fresh preachers and teachers; and his brother arrived in England February 3rd, 1738.

Meanwhile George Whitefield visited his native city, and attracted attention by his pious labours among the poor and the goal prisoners. Dr. Benson, the tutor of Lord Huntingdon, was then bishop of Gloucester; and hearing of the piety of Whitefield, he presented him with five guineas, and ordained him in the cathedral June 20th, 1736. The following sabbath the youthful orator delivered his first sermon in St. Mary's Church. Curiosity drew a vast audience; and he preached with remarkable animation and energy. He says, "Some few mocked, but most for the present seemed struck; and I have since heard that a complaint had been made to the bishop that I drove fifteen people mad the first sermon." He went to London, and made his first appearance there in Bishopsgate Church, and laboured in the Tower Chapel for two months with great zeal and success. He had received many pressing invitations to follow his friends to America; and when Charles Wesley returned, the accounts he gave of the colony, and of the Indians induced Whitefield to pay a visit to Georgia. Before he left, however, he visited his friends in various parts of the country. His fame spread rapidly throughout the nation; the churches were crowded, almost to suffocation; and the people listened with rapture to his thrilling addresses, which were frequently interrupted by sobs and strong cries. On his second visit to Bristol, before his voyage, he was met about a mile from the city by multitudes on foot, and some in coaches; the streets were lined with spectators, who blessed him as he passed; and the congregations were more numerous than he had ever witnessed. "Some," he says, "hung upon the rails, others climbed up the leads of the church; and altogether the church was so hot with their breath, that the steam would fall from the pillars like drops of rain." He preached twice at Bath, and again at Bristol and Gloucester: and then came to London, where similar marvellous crowds followed him. He generally preached nine times a week, and collected thousands of pounds for various charities. The assemblies were so great that the largest churches could not contain them; and the multitudes thronging the doors were obliged to be kept back by the constables. His popularity, however, stirred up many enemies among the clergy; several pulpits were closed against him; numerous complaints respecting him were lodged with the bishop: and perhaps active measures would have been taken to attempt to put him down, if he had not been on the point of leaving England. The ship which conveyed him to Georgia, set sail, just as the vessel, which brought John Wesley home, entered the harbour.

Among those who were induced from motives of curiosity to listen to the preaching of the Methodists, were the sisters of Lord Huntingdon. They were deeply impressed with the truth they heard from Mr. Ingham in Yorkshire, and were led to see the insufficiency of their own unrighteousness to secure the favour of God. The plan of salvation by faith in Christ was clearly unfolded to them; and they were enabled by divine grace to put their trust in Jesus Christ. They made a public profession of their change, and availed themselves of every opportunity to strengthen their faith, and increase their zeal. They manifested great anxiety for the salvation of others, but confined their early efforts to their family circle. Lady Margaret Hastings was the first to receive the truth, and to exhibit in her daily life the important change which had been wrought in her heart by the Holy Spirit. Next to the salvation of her own soul, that of her family and friends became the object of her constant care. She exhorted them faithfully and affectionately to flee from the wrath to come; and God was pleased to make her the honored instrument of the conversion of Lady Huntingdon, and of many of her family.

Lady Huntingdon often conversed with her on religious topics, and was exceedingly struck with one of her remarks, "that since she had known and believed in the

Lord Jesus Christ for life and salvation, she had been as happy as an angel." The Countess had never derived such happiness from her religion; and the contrast led her on reflection to see her own dark and sinful condition. Her illness increased the despondency of her mind; and she was about to give up all hope of salvation, when the words of Lady Hastings were brought to her recollection, and revived her spirits. She felt a strong desire to relinquish every other method, and to cast herself wholly upon Christ. This desire she expressed in fervent prayer to God, and was shortly after realized. Her mind was enlightened to discern the truth; her heart was softened to feel its power; soon her doubts vanished, her fears departed, and she was filled with joy and peace in believing. The dark and terrible night had now passed, and was succeeded by the dawn of a day which was clear, beautiful, and refulgent with the increasing brightness of the Sun of Righteousness. She became a new creature, and was amazed at the wondrous change which had passed over her. She regarded herself as a brand plucked from the burning; she had well-nigh perished, and had been snatched from the brink of Hell by the power of God. The contrast between her former condition and her present state was so great, that she was lifted, as it were, from sorrow to joy, from despair to hope, from death to life. Every power and principle of her nature was thrilled with the rich feeling of gratitude; the change in her heart exerted a beneficial influence on her body; her disorder took a favorable turn; she was at length restored to perfect health; and she solemnly dedicated herself to God as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to the Lord. When John and Charles Wesley soon after preached in the neighborhood of Donnington Park, she sent a kind message to them, acknowledging that she was one in heart with them, bidding them go on in the great work of the Lord, and assuring them of her determination to live to promote the glory of that Saviour who had died for her.

The terrible struggle, through which Lady Huntingdon had passed, had the effect of rendering her convictions more powerful, her experience more varied, and her zeal more energetic, than perhaps they otherwise would have been. Her mind was now calm and peaceful, and rapidly gained a clear insight into the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel; her will was bent in lowly submission to the will of God, and concentrated its energy to maintain an unwavering obedience to the divine commands. Her heart was enraptured with the grand views she obtained of God, and of her Saviour; and as she entwined her affections around the objects which were alone worthy of them, and experienced the love of Christ constraining her, she felt that her praises could never be too extravagant, nor her gratitude sufficiently ardent, for the inestimable blessings she had received. The language of her heart, as well as of her lips, was beautifully expressed by her friend Dr. Watts,

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far to small;
Love, so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

The change which she had experienced was very speedily manifested in her outward conduct. Religion had taken too strong a hold upon her inner nature to be restrained by the fear of man, or the frowns of the world. She openly confessed her faith in the Lord Jesus, and warmly supported those who preached the simple gospel. Her friends were astonished at her conduct, and unable to comprehend the spiritual darkness through which she had passed, and the spiritual happiness she now enjoyed, ridiculed her as a fanatic, and exclaimed, as Festus did to Paul, "Thou art beside thyself!" Some nobles even wished Lord Huntingdon to interpose his authority, and forbid her to continue her proceeding; but though he differed from her in his views of religion, he had too much respect for her love and sincerity to interfere in her religious concerns. He recommended her to converse with Dr. Benson, his former tutor, and now bishop of Gloucester; and she readily complied with his request. The learned dignitary was sent for; and he attempted to convince her that her conduct and sentiments were unnecessarily strict. She, however, was prepared for the contest; she brought many arguments from the Articles and Homilies, and quoted appropriate passages of Scripture to vindicate her conduct: and so clearly and faithfully set before the prelate his duties and responsibilities, that his temper was ruffled, he rose up in haste to depart, and bitterly lamented that he had ever ordained George Whitefield, to whom he attributed the change which had taken place in her mind. "My Lord," said Lady Huntingdon, "mark my words: when you are on your dying bed, that will be one of the few ordinations you will reflect upon with complacence." The prediction of Lady Huntingdon was verified by the conduct of the bishop a short time before his death. He then expressed his high regard for Whitefield, sent him ten guineas as a mark of his respect, and begged to be remembered by him in his prayers.

Dr. Southey, in his life of Wesley, has unblushingly asserted that the religious feelings of Lady Huntingdon originated in a decided insanity in her family; a statement which is false as to fact, and betrays his great ignorance of what he writes about; and he adds, that all the arguments of Bishop Benson were ineffectual to bring her to a saner sense of devotion. Such a statement would not have deserved notice, were it not that the talents and reputation of the Poet Laureate might be regarded by many as a guarantee for its validity. Truly, if such be insanity, England presented a very sorry spectacle during the days of Wesley and Whitefield. Hundreds and thousands were similarly affected as the Countess; some of the stars of the English nobility were like-minded; and even Kings and Princes consorted with, and highly appreciated the *insane!* The illusions of Southey were so completely scattered, and his misrepresentations and ridicule so thoroughly exposed, that his royal patron George IV., exclaimed with feelings of pity, when reading the animadversions upon him, "Oh my poor Poet Laureate! Oh my poor Poet Laureate!" No one can peruse the letters of Lady Huntingdon without being struck with the intellectual power, the good common sense, and the wise discrimination which they exhibit. She lived in an age of great excitement, and of mighty religious fervour, when the power of the Spirit was marvellously displayed; and her conduct appeared strange, only because, for some time previous, religion had been but little more than a name, and the church and the world had been slumbering in spiritual insensibility.

Before the great change had passed over her, Lady Huntingdon had been much at court, and numbered among her acquaintances, most of the celebrated characters of the day. She was on terms of great intimacy with the polished Lord Bolingbroke; and her frequent visits to Twickenham, at the residence of her aunt, Lady Fanny Shirley, brought her into the society of many of the literary men of the age. Among her personal friends were the witty and eccentric Lady Townshend, and Lady Mary Wortley Montague, the rival of her aunt at court, whose splendid talents threw an inexpressible charm even around the brilliant court circle. When the rupture took place between the Prince of Wales and his father George II., and the Prince set up his own court at Kew, Lady Huntingdon attended it; though she gradually discontinued her visits, that she might have more time and opportunity for doing good. Her frequent absence was noticed, and provoked the sarcasm of many who were in the habit of attending it. One day the Prince of Wales inquired of Lady Charlotte Edwin where Lady Huntingdon was, that she so seldom visited the circle. Lady Charlotte replied with a sneer, "I suppose praying with her beggars." The Prince shook his head, and turning to her Ladyship, said, "Lady Charlotte, when I am dying, I think I shall be happy to seize the skirt of Lady Huntingdon's mantle, to lift me up with her to heaven." This lady afterwards became very intimate with the Countess, and constantly attended the ministry of her preachers.

Lady Huntingdon throughout her life took a deep interest in everything which concerned the best interests of the nation. At one time she manifested great eagerness on political subjects, and an incident occured in 1738, in which she, with other noble ladies, became very conspicuous. In the month of May there were some very stormy debates in the House of Lords, respecting the depredations of the Spaniards, in which the Earl of Huntingdon and several of his friends took an active part. Lady Mary Wortley Montague has given a spirited, humorous description of this affair. "At the last warm debate in the House of Lords, it was unanimously resolved that there should be no unnecessary auditors; consequently the fair sex were excluded, and the gallery destined to the sole use of the House of Commons. Notwithstanding this determination, a tribe of dames resolved to show, on this occasion, that neither men nor laws could resist them. These heroines were Lady Huntingdon, the Duchess of Queensbury, the Duchess of Ancaster, Lady Westmorland, Lady Cobham, Lady Charlotte Edwin, Lady Archibald Hamilton and her daughter Mrs. Scott, Mrs Pendarves, and Lady Frances Saunderson. I am thus particular in their names since

I looked upon them as the boldest assertors and most resigned sufferers for liberty I ever read of. They presented themselves at the door at nine o'clock in the morning; when Sir William Saunderson respectfully informed them that the Chancellor had made an order against their admittance. The Duchess of Queensbury, as head of the squadron, "pished" at the ill-breeding of a mere lawyer, and desired Sir William to let them up stairs privately. After some modest refusals, he swore he would not admit them. Her Grace, with a noble warmth, answered that they would come in, in spite of the Chancellor and the whole House. This being reported, the Peers resolved to starve them out; an order was made that the doors should not be opened till they had raised their siege. These Amazons now showed themselves qualified for the duty even of foot soldiers; they stayed there till five in the afternoon without any sustenance, every now and then plying volleys of thumps, kicks, and raps with so much violence against the door, that the speakers in the House were scarce heard. When the Lords were not to be conquered by this, the two Duchesses, very well apprised of the use of stratagems in war, commanded a silence of half an hour; and the Chancellor, who thought this a certain proof of their absence, the Commons being also very impatient to enter, gave orders for the opening of the door; upon which they all rushed in, pushed aside their competitors, and placed themselves in the front rows of the gallery. They staid there till after eleven, when the House rose; and during the debate gave applause, and showed marks of dislike, not only by smiles and winks, which have always been allowed in these cases, but by noisy laughs, and apparent contempts; which is supposed the true reason why poor Lord Hervey spoke so miserably."

In 1738 the first Methodist Society was formed in the Nevills's Court Chapel, Fetter Lane, in connection with the Moravians; in whose favour John Wesley had been greatly prepossessed. Here the eminent preachers unfolded the truths of the gospel to the thronging multitudes: and Lord and Lady Huntingdon often attended their meetings. While Whitefield was in America, Wesley was indefatigable in his labours. In London he preached not only in crowded churches, but to the condemned felons in Newgate, and to his little societies in Bear Yard, the Minories, and other places; and spent a considerable time at Oxford. The arrival of Whitefield from America increased the excitement which prevailed in London. In Fetter Lane the services were attended with remarkable scenes. Whitefield, the Wesleys, Mr. Ingham, Howel Harris a celebrated Welsh preacher, and others, attended the love-feasts; when sometimes whole nights were spent in prayer, and many were filled with such joy that they cried out and fell on the ground, and were overwhelmed with a sense of the divine presence. The clergy, however, greatly discountenanced their efforts; and the churches were gradually closed against these zealous preachers. Mr. Ingham was very successful in his labours in Yorkshire; the churches were thronged with attentive hearers; and a great awakening was produced.

Though the Bishop of London had written a pastoral letter against the Methodists, he accepted Whitefield's title, and gave him letters dismissory to Dr. Secker, Bishop of Oxford, who gave similar letters to the Bishop of Gloucester, through which he was ordained priest at Oxford by the same prelate who had conferred upon him his deacon's orders. Dr. Benson wrote to Lord Huntingdon an account of Whitefield's ordination, and expressed the hope that the act would give satisfaction to her Ladyship, and that she would not have occasion again to find fault with the old tutor. "Though mistaken on some points," he says, "I think him a very pious, well meaning young man, with good abilities and great zeal. I find his Grace of Canterbury thinks highly of him. I pray God grant him great success in all his undertakings for the good of mankind, and the revival of true religion and holiness among us, in these degenerate days; in which prayer your Lordship and my kind good Lady Huntingdon will most heartily join."

Whitefield preached wherever he could obtain a church; and when, at length, they were closed against him, he stood in the open air. "I thought" he says, "it might be doing the service of my Lord who had a mountain for his pulpit, and the heavens for his sounding board, and who, when his gospel was refused by the Jews, sent his servants into the highways and hedges." Kingswood, near Bristol, first witnessed the marvellous effects of his open-air services. On Feb. 17, 1739, he preached at Rose Green to about two hundred persons. The ice was broken; and every time he visited Kingswood, the number of his hearers increased. Thousands soon flocked from Bristol; the poor colliers came out of their coalpits in vast swarms; the tears flowed, and made white gutters down their black faces; and very many were deeply impressed. The youthful preacher was extremely diffident, yet received strength from heaven. "The open firmament above me, the prospect of the adjacent fields, with the sight of thousands and thousands, some in coaches, some on horseback, and some on the trees, and at times all affected and drenched in tears together, to which sometimes was added the solemnity of the approaching evening —was almost too much for me, and quite overcame me." After a tour in Wales, in company with Howel Harris, a man of great learning, zeal, and ability, Whitefield travelled towards London, preaching everywhere on his way. He obtained permission to preach in Islington Church; but during the reading of the prayers, the churchwardens forbade him to enter the pulpit: the congregation, therefore, turned out into the churchyard, and Whitefield mounted a tombstone. He preached to vast crowds on Moorfield, Kennington Common, and Blackheath, where great numbers were powerfully impressed, and cried out for salvation. The singing of the assembled thousands could be heard two miles off: and it is said that the clear powerful voice of Whitefield could, under favourable circumstances, be distinctly heard for nearly a mile.

Lord and Lady Huntingdon not only attended the meetings in Fetter-Lane, but constantly followed the ministry of Whitefield; and by their example and influence, they induced many of the nobility to listen to his sermons. Her Ladyship availed herself of her intimacy with persons of rank to bring the high and the learned to a knowledge of salvation. She met with the celebrated Dr. Young at the residence of Lord Bolingbroke, and had many opportunities of seeing and conversing with him. After the death of his daughter-in-law, Lady Temple, whom he had taken to France, where she died of consumption, and for whom, he sings with such pathetic notes,

> "With pious sacrilege a grave I stole:"

a gloomy melancholy settled upon him, which was greatly increased by the death of his wife. The Countess endeavoured to pour the consolations of the gospel into his bleeding heart. She introduced him to Charles Wesley, and persuaded him to attend the ministry of the Methodist leaders; from whom he derived much comfort and support. There can be little doubt that the evangelical portions of the *"Night Thoughts"* were the result of the impressions produced by the preaching of Whitefield and his coadjutors: so strikingly do they resemble the utterances, in a versified form, of that prince of preachers.

Many distinguished characters were prevailed upon to accompany Lady Huntingdon to hear the gifted Whitefield. Lady Ann Frankland, daughter of the Earl of Scarborough, was the first among the nobility converted by his ministry. Her husband was so enraged at it, that he treated her with the greatest cruelty, and ordered her to leave his house only three weeks after their marriage. The Countess greatly cheered her under her trials; but her sorrows were too poignant for her to bear, and in less than nine months she passed into the grave. Lady Betty Finch, wife of Lord Mansfield; Lady Townshend, so noted for her wit and eccentricities: Lady Mary Wort ley Montague; the Duchess of Buckingham; the renowned Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, one of the most influential ladies of the day; the Duchess of Queensbury, so celebrated for wit and beauty by Pope, Swift, and Prior; and many other noble women corresponded with Lady Huntingdon, and accompanied her to hear Whitefield. The Countess was very anxious to impress the great truths of the gospel on the minds of her friends; and in her letters the Duchess of Malborough acknowledges her great kindness in seeking her religious improvement, and expresses the hope that she will be the better for her excellent advice; She says, "I have lived to see great changes in the world—have acted a conspicous part myself; and now hope, in my old days, to obtain mercy from God, as I never expect any at the hands of my fellow-creatures. You must direct me. You are all goodness and kindness, and I often wish I had a portion of it. Woman of wit, beauty, and quality cannot hear too many humiliating truths."

The Duchess of Buckingham was very much opposed to the sentiments of the Methodists, and wondered how Lady Huntingdon could relish them so much. Her pride refused to bend to the requirements of the word of God, and was greatly offended by those "humiliating truths" which her rival gladly received from the Countess.

She, however, accepted her invitation to hear her favorite preacher, and, with the Duchess of Queensbury, accompanied Lady Huntingdon to the church where Whitefield was preaching. The latter lady was at one period of her life deeply impressed with the preaching of the gospel, and constantly attended the ministry of the Methodists. She was extremely partial to Mr. Ingham and Charles Wesley, who indulged the hope that she would employ her splendid talents and extensive influence for the promotion of evangelical religion; but her wit and beauty drew her into scenes of dissipation, which effaced the holy impressions she had early received. The good, however, effected by the efforts of Lady Huntingdon was very great; and through her persuasions, numbers of the aristocracy were brought within sound of the faithful preaching of the gospel. She embraced every opportunity of speaking on religious subjects to her friends in her mansions; and her manners were so polished, her talents so conspicuous, that her society was much sought after, notwithstanding her religion. Her drawing-rooms in town were crowded with doctors, poets, philosophers, statesmen, lords and ladies; where the great truths of religion were discussed; and she not unfrequently astonished those present by the clearness and force of her views of truth.

The Countess was very intimate with Lady Margaret Cavendish Harley, only daughter of the Earl of Oxford; who was distinguished for her love of the fine arts, and patronage of literature. Their friendship was cemented by her frequent visits to Wimpole, Cambridgeshire, the seat of Lord Oxford. This nobleman, who was the owner of the Harleian Library, now in the British Museum, was a great admirer of Whitefield's oratory, and frequently attended his ministry. He had a high opinion of the character of Lady Huntingdon; and when near his death, he sent for her to give him spiritual advice and consolation in his last moments. He died at the early age of forty-two, after testifying to the fact, that the profound scholar and the philosopher could learn much from a pious and zealous lady. At Wimpole, the Countess met with the celebrated Miss Robinson, a lady of well known genius, and was present at her marriage with Mr. Montague, the distinguished philosopher and mathematician; and there is every reason to believe that her pious conversation was blessed to them.

These instances, and many others might be quoted where great good was produced among the nobility through her efforts, are sufficient to show how deeply important was the work in which Lady Huntingdon was engaged; and how widely her influence was exerted for the conversion of the nobility, and the scientific and literary characters of her times. It must also be remembered that she did not neglect the poor, in her concern for the rich. While her drawing-rooms were filled with brilliant assemblies, her kitchen was crowded with poor creatures, to whom she dispensed her charities for the relief of their wants, and presented Jesus Christ as the only remedy for their guilt. It is impossible to estimate the result of these labors; many instances have come to light where she has been made useful, but the majority of cases will never be known till the great day of account. She rendered incalculable service to the cause of true religion; and as her history is unfolded, it will be seen how much Methodism was indebted to her influence, her counsel, and her self-denying efforts.

CHAPTER III.—A. D. 1739—1742.

LAY-PREACHERS INTRODUCED BY LADY HUNTINGDON.—MR. MAXFIELD.—THE COUNTESS AT BATH.—DEATH OF LADY BETTY HASTINGS.—LADY HUNTINGDON'S CONCERN FOR HER SERVANTS.—BISHOP BURNET.—ASHBY SCHOOLS.—DEATH OF MISS COOPER.—LABOURS AND SUCCESS OF LADY HUNTINGDON AMONG THE POOR.

THE great stir which the Methodists had created, was produced not only by declaring the simple truths of the gospel, but also by the then singular manner in which they presented them. The sermons of the preachers had previously been dry essays on some point of morality, or theological controversy; which were carelessly read in the pulpit, and lulled the audience to sleep. The Methodists left their manuscripts at home, and poured forth their experience of divine truth in stirring extemporaneous strains. Their oratory was fervid and powerful, because their souls were deeply impressed with the importance of their message; and the spiritual fire, which glowed within, animated their discourses, and awakened a powerful sympathy in the minds of their hearers. The number of ordained ministers, however, was insufficient to meet the demands made for their services. Whitefield was realizing great success in America; John Wesley was following up the labours of that distinguished man at Bristol; Mr. Ingham was working amid the dark heathenish population of Yorkshire; Howel Harris was journeying through Wales, and attracting many to the standard of the cross; and others were itinerating throughout the country. A new agency was now rising, through the instrumentality of Lady Huntingdon, which has done more to bring the gospel into the villages of our land, than the most illustrious men, sent from our colleges and universities, have been enabled to effect.

The first example of lay-preaching appears to have been set by Mr. Bowers, who, after Whitefield had finished his sermon in Islington church-yard, rose to address the people. He also preached in the streets of Oxford; but Charles Wesley severely reprimanded him for preaching without being ordained; and the timid man confessed that he had done wrong, and promised never to offend again. John Wesley greatly felt the need of some one to watch over the little societies, when he was absent. He accordingly sent Mr. Cennick, a man well known in the history of the revival of religion, to reside at Kingswood school, which Whitefield had founded, and to which Lady Huntingdon liberally contributed; that he might read to them the Word of God, pray with them, and exhort them to continue in the ways of holiness. When Wesley left London, he appointed Mr. Maxfield to perform a similar duty in the society at Fetter Lane. Lady Huntingdon was at this time a constant attendant at the chapel, and a member of the first Methodist Society there formed. She was greatly pleased with the talents and fervency of Mr. Maxfield, and having frequently heard him pray, she exhorted him to expound the Scriptures. His expositions were singularly clear and beautiful; his voice and manner rendered his utterances very impressive; and his labours were very useful, and gave a mighty stimulus to the piety and zeal of the society. After hearing him several times, Lady Huntingdon wrote a letter to John Wesley, and communicated to him how greatly Mr. Maxfield was blessed by the Lord. She confessed that she was surprised at his talents; that when she first heard him she expected very little from him; but as he proceeded he gained her attention, and at length so riveted her, that she remained immovable on her seat. She says, "You can have no idea what an attachment I have to him." The Countess took a great interest in his proceedings, and delighted to unite with him in prayer, of which he had an extraordinary gift, and to attend his expositions. From the exhorter to the preacher is but a single step; yet it does not appear that Mr. Maxfield contemplated taking that step. He was a sincere humble-minded Christian, anxious to do good, and to save souls. His services were very acceptable to the people, and multitudes flocked to hear him; whose deep and serious attention, and the urgent entreaties of Lady Huntingdon, induced him to persevere in his efforts, and at length to preach. His ministrations were greatly blessed by the Lord; many were brought to see their sinful condition, and to find pardon and peace through the merits of Jesus Christ.

The preaching of Mr. Maxfield, however, gave great offence to several members of the society; who declared that he had usurped the sacred office, without being called to it; and represented to Mr. Wesley that it was an irregularity which should be instantly put down. He immediately hastened to London, and reached his mother's house, adjoining the Foundry in the City Road, greatly displeased. His mother was a woman of genuine piety, clear understanding, and good sense. She had often heard Mr. Maxfield preach, and was fully persuaded, by the tokens of success, that Christ had called him to be his ambassador. She perceived that her son was displeased and irritated, and inquired the cause. He indignantly replied, "Why Thomas Maxfield has turned preacher." The old lady looked seriously at her son, and said, "John, take care what you do with respect to that young man; for he is as surely called of God to preach as you are. Examine what has been the fruits of his preaching, and hear him also yourself." He attended to the good advice of his mother, and after having heard him, he expressed his satisfaction, and gave him his sanction by saying, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good." He clearly discerned that it would be impossible to keep his followers from preaching; and he, therefore, admitted them to be his assistants, and to preach wherever he appointed them. It is, however, a fact which should be remembered, that we owe all the blessings which the world has received from lay-preachers to the good sense and spiritual discernment of Lady Huntingdon, and the mother of John Wesley.*

At the close of the year, 1739, the Earl and Countess of Huntingdon paid a visit to Bath, which was then in the height of its reputation as a fashionable city. The Earl had been very much indisposed during the previous summer, and had been strongly recommended to use the Bath waters. His intimate friend, Mr. Allen, then resided at Prior Park, the most magnificent seat among the many beautiful spots around, where Pope and Dr. Warburton, afterwards Bishop of Gloucester, were visiting. In the society of these distinguished men, Lady Huntingdon found many opportunities of introducing religious topics, which she discussed with great force and zeal, and enlightened by the clearness of her comprehension of divine things. Warburton, however, was bitterly opposed to her sentiments, and embraced every occasion to denounce the preaching of the ministers she attended. He pronounced her an "incurable enthusiast;" and throughout his life, he fiercely censured and opposed the principles and adherents of Lady Huntingdon. He hated Methodism, and applied the term as an opprobrious epithet to all who were conspicuous for their piety, and their enjoyment of the religion of Jesus Christ. Mr. Charles Wesley was then at Bath; but met with such opposition, that he preached only once or twice. He, however, laboured very successfully at Bristol, Bradford, and the neighbouring places; whither he was accompanied by the Countess. The Earl never thwarted her Ladyship in any of her plans; but Warburton was so deeply prejudiced against her, that he was ever ready to ridicule her on her return from these excursions.

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* On lay-preaching see Notes in the Life of Walker, of Truro.—Ed.

Before this year closed, the family of Lord Huntingdon was thrown into mourning by the decease of his sister Lady Betty Hastings. She had spent the greater portion of her life at Ledstone Hall, Yorkshire; which came into her possession after the death of her brother George, the eighth Earl of Huntingdon. It was while on a visit to Lady Betty, that the Ladies Hastings were brought to a knowledge of the truth. Mr. Ingham was preaching in the neighbourhood, and curiosity led them to hear him; when they were so deeply impressed with the truth, that they invited him to Ledstone Hall, where he soon became a great favorite. Lady Betty was a very remarkable character. She possessed good natural abilities, a vigorous intellect, a sound judgment, and an extraordinary quickness of comprehension. Her temper was sweet and placid; her heart benevolent and affectionate; her manners refined and engaging. She employed her talents and her ample fortune in doing good; and secured the esteem of those who were her equals in rank, and of the poorest of her dependants, by her piety and her unostentatious generosity. She died December 22nd, 1739, in the fifty-seventh year of her age; and was interred with great solemnity in the family vault at Ledstone. Her loss was severely felt in Yorkshire; her sisters returned to Donnington Park, with the Earl and Countess; and Ledstone Hall became the property of Lord Huntingdon.

While Lady Huntingdon was in the midst of her labours among the nobility and the poor, she enjoyed much of the favour of God. She lived in a region of peace and joy; the world and its pleasures possessed no charm to attract her attention; and she daily crucified the flesh with all its affections and lusts. At the beginning of the year 1742, she says:—"My whole heart has not one single grain of thirst after approbation. I feel alone with God; he fills the whole void; I see all mortals under my feet. I have not one wish, one will, one desire, but in him: he hath set my feet in a large room. All but God's children seem as so many machines appointed for uses which I have nothing to do with. I have wondered and stood amazed that God should make a conquest of all within me by love. Others may be conquered by less gifts and graces, but what must that evil heart be that nothing but the love of God can conquer? I am brought to less than nothing; broken to pieces like the potter's vessel. I long to leap into the flames to get rid of my sinful flesh, and that every atom of these ashes might be separate, that neither time, place, nor person should stay God's spirit."

Lady Huntingdon took the deepest interest in the welfare of her servants and workpeople. She instructed them in the scriptures, pointed out to them the way of salvation, through Christ, and exhorted them to believe in him for pardon and peace. She met with much success in her efforts. She once spoke to a workman, who was repairing a garden wall, and urged him to reflect on the state of his soul, and on eternity. Some years after, she was speaking to another on the same subject, and said to him, "Thomas, I fear you never pray, nor look to Christ for salvation." Your Ladyship is mistaken," he replied, "I heard what passed between you and James, when he was mending the wall some years ago, and the word designed for him took effect on me." "How did you hear it," she asked; and he answered, "I heard it on the other side of the garden through a hole in the wall, and shall never forget the impression I then received."

The Countess had a great veneration for the memory of Bishop Burnet, and took a warm interest in the spiritual welfare of his descendants. She was at this time very intimate with his daughter, Mrs. Mitchell, a woman of genuine piety and benevolence, who frequently visited and conversed with her on religious subjects. The grandson of the excellent prelate, Richard West, Esq., was a great favourite with both Lord and Lady Huntingdon: but a rapid consumption terminated his brief career at the age of twenty-six, when his piety and talents gave the promise of extensive usefulness. She admired Burnet among other things for his condemnation of pluralities, which he termed, "*Sacrilegious robberies,*" and was fond of relating a circumstance which transpired respecting him, which displayed his conscientiousness and integrity. In his first charge to his clergy at Salisbury, he quoted the following anecdote:—St. Bernard, being consulted by one of his followers, whether he might accept two benefices, asked him, "How will you be able to serve them both?" "I intend," answered the priest, "to officiate in one of them by a deputy." "Will your deputy be damned for you too?" cried the saint, "Believe me; you may serve your cure by proxy, but you must be damned in person."

Lady Huntingdon spent the greater part of 1742 at Donnington Park, in devising schemes for more extensively diffusing divine truth, and ameliorating the condition of the poor around her. She was deeply sensible of the value of sound religious education, and accordingly established schools at Ashby-de-la-Zouch, which had long been in the possession of the Huntingdon family, and at Markfield, a village mid-way between Ashby and Leicester, for the instruction of the children of those districts. For a short time they appeared to prosper well, and then they gradually declined. The parents foolishly allowed their children to absent themselves, and were extremely careless of the advantages to be derived. She was greatly discouraged at the result of her efforts; but was fully convinced that, under such circumstances, it would be useless to continue the services of the masters. They were accordingly dismissed, the schools were closed, and Lady Huntingdon, aware that a school would never prosper without the co-operation of the parents, directed her exertions into another channel. She communicated to John Wesley her determination, and stated that it was but "too plain the time is not yet come." Between these two distinguished characters there existed at this time the most intimate friendship. The letters that passed between them are full of that freedom and spirituality, which their cordiality and anxiety for the revival of religion prompted. The Countess gratefully received counsel and instruction from Wesley; and he solicited her judgment on many occasions. From her letters it is evident, that about this time, he submitted to her his Journals for her inspection; for she tells him that he has exercised his gift of humility in an extraordinary manner, to ask her opinion upon the journal, and that she does not think there is a single thing in it that ought to be omitted. It greatly delighted and strengthened her heart, and awakened within her the spirit of prayer, that she might live and die in the service in which he was engaged.

There was at this period residing with the Countess, a young lady named Cooper, who was in the last stage of consumption. She expressed a great desire to see John Wesley; and Lady Huntingdon wrote to him, and urged him to come down and visit her, before her spirit took its departure. He reached Donnington Park May 22nd, and remarks, "Miss Cooper was just alive, but as soon as we came in, her spirits greatly revived. For three days we rejoiced in the grace of God, whereby she was filled with a hope full of immortality." Her sufferings were very acute, but her faith was triumphant; and often after a night of intense pain, she said, "Oh! what a delightful night I have felt." Lady Huntingdon was constant in her attendance upon her; and though deeply affected by her removal, she seemed to partake more of the happiness of the departed, than of the sorrow of the mourner. She says in a letter written at this time, "Miss Cooper is still with me; it has not seemed like death among us; we rejoice upon every remembrance of her; all tears are wiped from our eyes; her last hours were all spent in prayer; and when her change came, her countenance spoke her blessed; and I, for a moment, tasted her joy; for I thought my whole soul was so filled with delight, it could have followed."

The happiness Lady Huntingdon experienced, prompted her to increase her exertions to bring others to participate in it. She was unremitting in her attentions to the poor; she bountifully relieved their necessities, visited them in sickness, conversed with them about the state of their souls, and prayed most earnestly with them in their houses. She found that the instruction and short exhortations given to them were of great service to them, especially to her workpeople, with whom she spent a part of every day. She never waited for them to solicit her services; but sought them out with great diligence, entered into all their troubles, and awakened their gratitude by the kindness of her manner. Soon after the death of Miss Cooper, her Ladyship walked down to the water-side, where six small houses were inhabited by the poor. Two of them were public houses, which she says "appear to be a harbour for the devils themselves;" yet she often entered this dark locality to visit a poor woman, in whom she took a deep interest. One day the woman told her that she had been asking her neighbour, whether she could know before her departure if she should be happy; and they requested her opinion. The Countess at once took a friend with her, and found the poor woman in great distress of body and mind. She cried out in deep agony, "I may die, and what will become of my soul; O, pray for me! O, mercy! mercy!" Her Ladyship reminded her that her past deeds could never atone for her sins, and that it was right to cherish the feeling of guiltiness in the sight of God; and said, "Now you are quite lost, you will find Him who came to seek and to save just such as you are." The poor woman however, refused to be comforted, and passed the night in great fear.

The next morning Lady Huntingdon was at her bedside, and read and prayed with her; and about six at night, they brought her word that she was seized with a cold shivering fit and was in the agonies of death. Her Ladyship hastened to the college, and saw the poor creature held down by four men, and suffering great anguish and pain. The conflict, however, passed, and the storm was succeeded by a beautiful calm: and when Lady Huntingdon came at noon the following day, the woman exclaimed, "O my Lady, my dear Lady, what great things the Lord hath done for me. I have no doubt or fear. He hath given me that peace which the world can neither give nor take away. You have saved my soul; you know the blessedness I have found this night. O what a thing it is to have the heart all flaming to the Lord Jesus." The Countess was filled with unspeakable pleasure in witnessing the result of her instructions to this poor creature. She delighted to hear her experience of God's dealings with her, and to observe her simplicity and holy joy. She constantly visited her, and brought many to witness her faith, and had the satisfaction of seeing one of the daughters also turning to the Lord.

The hand of death, however, soon snatched away the body which had become the temple of the Holy Ghost, and set the enraptured spirit free. About a week before her departure, she was in great pain, and longed for death. One evening the Countess, with her sisters-in-law Lady Anne and Lady Frances, prayed with her; when she broke out in praise to Christ, and continued all night crying, "Glory, Glory, to the Lamb." She once prevailed upon Lord Huntingdon to accompany her on her visit, when he was surprised and affected even to tears at what he witnessed. The poor woman gradually became weaker, as her spirit ripened for the better land. At length the hour came. The Countess was present, with her excellent sisters-in-law, and many others. Lady Frances approached, and said to her, "Your sufferings will soon be over." She made a feeble motion, stretched out her hand, and whispered a faint farewell. She soon after collected the little strength remaining, and said, "The fear of death is gone.—The name of Jesus—how sweet! All glory to the Lamb." She could proceed no further; but by signs, looks, and soft accents, manifested the happiness she enjoyed. "Just before she breathed her last," says her Ladyship, "she gave us a parting smile; and her happy spirit entered into rest. There were many witnesses around her dying bed, to whom I spoke with much fervour and fidelity. The impression will, I trust, be lasting. Vast numbers, from respect, as well as from curiosity, attended her funeral."

Such were the labours of this distinguished Lady. She left the society of the rich and the noble, for that of the poor and the sinful. She denied herself the luxury and ease, which her rank and fortune placed within her reach, that she might follow the example of her Saviour, "who went about doing good." In her mansion, she was the model of an affectionate mistress to her servants; who respected and loved her, and never presumed on her kindness. Abroad, she was the missionary of the cross, ever on the alert to save souls. No darkness was too terrible for her to visit; even the "harbour for devils themselves" was entered, that she might seek out the perishing victims, and attempt to rescue them from the power of Satan. Her example is worthy of being followed by all. What a mighty change in society would be effected, if every lady would employ her leisure, and a portion of her wealth, in active exertions for the good of those around her! She would experience the gratitude which Lady Huntingdon received from those whom she blessed. No wonder that she says, "I find some difficulty in keeping them from clinging to me, such wondrous love they bear me." They will ever fondly cherish the memory of their benefactor, and will be her crown of rejoicing at the last great day and for ever.

CHAPTER IV. A. D. 1741—1746.

LADY HUNTINGDON AT DONNINGTON.—PIOUS CLERGY.—WHITEFIELD ON MOORFIELDS. LADY HUNTINGDON AT BATH AND CLIFTON.—POET SAVAGE, AND HIS MOTHER. LEDSTONE HALL.—PROGRESS OF METHODISM IN YORKSHIRE.—MR. GRIMSHAW.—JOHN NELSON. — PERSECUTION.—DEATH OF GEORGE AND FERDINANDO HASTINGS. DR. WATTS.—DR. DODDRIDGE.—THE PRETENDER.—THE COUNTESS AT CLIFTON.—DEATH OF LORD HUNTINGDON; HIS CHARACTER.

John Wesley quitted Donnington Park before the death of Miss Cooper, and preached in various parts of Yorkshire. He then visited Epworth, where he was formerly curate to his father; and being denied the pulpit, he gave notice that he would preach in the church-yard. A vast congregation assembled; and he stood near the east end of the church, upon his father's tombstone, and preached from the words, "The kingdom of heaven is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

While the Countess resided at her mansion in Leicestershire, the Wesleys and their associates became constant visitors, and were received by her Ladyship as the servants of that God to whom she had solemnly dedicated herself, and by Lord Huntingdon with every mark of polite attention. This accomplished nobleman possessed such love and veneration for his Countess that, instead of thwarting any of her plans for promoting the diffusion of truth and the interests of religion, he afforded her much facility and encouragement to gratify the desires of her heart. Every minister of the gospel, of whatever name and denomination, whom she wished to invite, was always welcomed at Donnington Park, and treated by his Lordship with that politeness and affability, for which he was so distinguished. He freely conversed on religious subjects with many of these worthy men; and when, on one occasion, the conversation turned on the doctrine of the atonement through the death of Christ, he frankly confessed, "The morality of the Bible I admire; but the doctrine of the atonement I cannot comprehend." It was a matter of great grief to her Ladyship, that his heart remained insensible to the beauties of the gospel; and though it never disturbed their domestic felicity, it drew many prayers from her heart for his conversion.

George Whitefield had, meanwhile, been zealously pursuing his energetic labours. After his separation from Wesley, he visited Scotland; where he preached in the churches and in the fields with astonishing success, and collected about five hundred pounds for his Orphan House. He returned through Wales, where he married Mrs. Elizabeth James, a widow; and travelled to Bristol, and thence to London, preaching everywhere with his accustomed energy and success. Moorfields was then a place of great resort during the Easter and Whitsuntide holidays, and thousands attended the fairs and shows day and night. Whitefield issued forth on Whit-Monday at six in the morning, and again at noon, and a third time in the evening; and preached to the assembled crowds amid the most exciting scenes. The merry-andrews were deserted; which so enraged them, that one mounted a man's shoulders, and attempted to lash the preacher with a long whip. All sorts of annoyances were created to drown his voice; a recruiting sergeant, with drum and fife, marched through the congregation; mountebanks played their antics before him; and showmen sounded a terrible blast of trumpets. His preaching was very successful. He says, "At a moderate computation I received, I believe, a thousand notes from persons under conviction; and soon after upwards of three hundred were received into the society in one day. Some I married that had lived together without marriage; one man had exchanged his wife for another, and given fourteen shillings in exchange. Numbers that seemed as it were, to have been bred up for Tyburn, were at that time plucked as firebrands out of the burning." He spent the greater part of 1742, in Scotland, and returned to London to resume his duties at the Tabernacle.

The Earl and Countess of Huntingdon were now constant in their attendance on the ministry of Whitefield and were often accompanied by the Ladies Hastings; and occasionally by the Prince of Wales and his youngest brother William, the Duchess of Marlborough, the Duchess of Buchingham, and many of the nobility. At the beginning of the next year, Whitefield itinerated in Gloucestershire and Wales; and established at Waterford an Association of societies and ministers, which he and his brethren had agreed upon for their mutual edification and encouragement; the number of which was greatly increased throughout the principality. At one of the meetings of the Association, a proposition was made to separate formally from the Established Church; "but," says Whitefield, "the far greater part opposed it, and with good reason; for we enjoy such great liberty under the mild and gentle government of his present Majesty King George, that I think we can do our country and the cause of God more service in ranging up and down, preaching repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, to those multitudes would come neither into church nor meeting, but who are led by curiosity to follow us into the fields."

Lady Huntingdon spent the winter of 1742, at Bath, in the company of her relatives, Lady Fanny Shirley, and Lady Anne and Lady Frances Hastings. The imprisonment of the poet Savage for debt, in the common goal of Bristol, was then the general topic of conversation .n the higher circles at London, Bath and Clifton. His career had been a very singular one. His mother, once Countess of Macclesfield, and afterwards Mrs. Brett, disowned her child, and left him to pass his infancy and childhood, under the precarious protection of strangers. He early commenced his career as an author, and plunged into scenes of dissipation and vice. In a broil at a tavern, he killed a man, and was condemned to death on the evidence of his mother and an infamous woman. The intercession of the Countess of Hertford, the friend of Lady Huntingdon, procured for him the royal pardon; and his popularity was increased by the notorious cruelty, and implacable hatred of his mother. His season of prosperity, however, was soon clouded by his ingratitude; and he vainly struggled with poverty and distress. Lady Fanny had known him at the residence of Pope, and now sent him relief. Soon after his imprisonment, Lady Huntingdon and her family removed to Clifton, and proposed to raise a subscription for the benefit of the unhappy man; but he pertinaciously refused to sanction it. His keeper, Mr. Dagge, was well known to her Ladyship as a frequent hearer of Whitefield; who was now preaching at Bristol, and often visited him at his house. Savage was principally supported by this "tender goaler," as Johnson calls him; and often heard the gifted preacher, not only in the prison-chapel, but also at the table of his humane keeper. Lady Huntingdon and her family did not confine their benevolence to the relief of his temporal wants; they frequently visited him in prison, and anxiously sought to direct his attention to the momentous concerns of eternity. Notwithstanding their civility and kindness, he gratified his resentment by writing a satirical poem; which would only have alienated his remaining friends, had he not abandoned the task at the urgent request of Lady Fanny. He was seized with a painful disorder, which ultimately brought on a fever, of which he died, July 31st, 1743, leaving behind him a character strangely checkered with vices and good qualities.

About nine years after, when Lady Huntingdon was at Bath, she was accosted in the street by an elderly gentlewoman, who, with much politeness, inquired for her address, intending to do herself the pleasure of calling upon her Ladyship. She omitted to ask the name of the stranger, and in a short time left Bath without hearing or seeing anything more of the old lady. Nearly a year after, Lord Tyrconnel presented to her a letter from this stranger It was from the mother of the poet Savage; who after apologizing for her seeming rudeness in not calling upon her Ladyship, says:—

"The day after I saw your Ladyship, I was seized with such a violent illness, that I thought I should have died; and even now whilst I write, a shuddering horror steals over me at the recollection of what I then endured from the terrifying of an alarmed conscience. When you call to mind some transactions in the life of the miserable individual who now addresses you, perhaps you will recoil with disgust from any association with a being so depraved and so debased. But, oh, dear Madam, recollect for a moment that I am touching my last hour, and that the prospect is dark and dreary as the tomb to which I am rapidly hastening. I tremble, yes, my knees smite against each other at the apprehension of the sentence I must receive at that awful tribunal before which I must soon appear. But I trust there may be mercy, even for me, vile offender as I am."

This was an object to excite the compassionate interest of Lady Huntingdon; and though there are no documents to testify to it, there can be no doubt that her Ladyship visited this wretched woman, and endeavoured to point out how even her great crimes could be forgiven through Jesus Christ. She died October 11th, 1753.

In the summer of 1743, the Earl and Countess of Huntingdon, with the Ladies Hastings, arrived at Ledstone Hall, which had not been visited by any of the family since the decease of Lady Betty Hastings. The progress of Methodism in Yorkshire had been very encouraging. Mr. Ingham and Mr. Rogers, a clergyman of the church of England, were attracting great crowds of hearers; and a number of Moravian ministers settled in the country. Many lay-preachers also arose, among whom were three brothers of the name of Batty, who were eloquent preachers. The societies were considered in communion with the Established Church, and in union with the Moravians, till being greatly disturbed by mobs, they were compelled to shelter themselves under the Toleration Act, and license their chapels by the name of *The Protestant Church of the United Brethren.* A mighty coadjutor was raised up in the Rev. William Grimshaw, rector of Haworth, near Bradford; a village, whose inhabitants were as wild and uncultivated as the soil, and as cold and lifeless as the bleak rocks and hills which surrounded them. His preaching was powerful and effective, and aroused the attention of men. Soon his church was crowded with astonished hearers; and a great reformation in the morals of the place quickly appeared. He visited his parish from house to house, teaching and expostulating with his people; and paid great attention to the aged and the young. His energy and zeal were not confined to his own parish; he assisted Mr. Ingham in his circuits; and in his *idle* week preached about fourteen times, whilst in his *busy* week, the number of his sermons sometimes amounted to thirty. While Lady

Huntingdon was at Ledstone, Mr. and Lady Margaret Ingham, and Mr. Grimshaw were guests at the Hall; and were afterwards joined by Charles Wesley and Mr. Graves, who were itinerating in Yorkshire with considerable success. During their stay at the mansion, there was preaching twice for many successive days, and great crowds were gathered from various parts, and often from a great distance. The congregations were so vast that the services were generally held in the open air, and often many sermons were preached at intervals on the same day.

There was then a preacher in Yorkshire, named John Nelson, of whom her Ladyship had heard so much that she greatly desired to see him. He was a native ot Birstal near Leeds; and while employed in the building of Somerset House, London, was deeply impressed by the preaching of Wesley and Whitefield, and led to believe in Christ. On his return to his native place, he longed to impart the blessings he had received to his friends; whom he assembled at his house. The room was soon crowded; and when his house could not contain those who flocked to him, he stood on his door-step in the evening, and talked about the way of salvation. Mr. Ingham heard him expound, and secured his services to exhort in his societies; which he did with surprising success. Lady Huntingdon, accompanied by Mr. Ingham and Mr. Graves, went to Birstal to hear this remarkable exhorter. After Mr. Ingham had addressed the assembled thousands, John Nelson rose, and spoke for half an hour amidst the breathless silence of the audience. The Countess was delighted, and, when parting, told him with her characteristic energy, that God had called him to the work, and would severely punish him if he grew weary of it, and added, "He that calleth you is mighty to save; fear not, press forward; He will bless your testimony." John followed her advice, and pressed forward; he greatly extended his circuit, and preached in different parts of the country. Many were the difficulties and dangers he met with. Sometimes a fierce mob attacked him while preaching, and drove him and his congregation to some place of refuge; missiles and mud were thrown at him; and his life endangered by the violence of his enemies.

The vicar of Birstal resolved to rid himself of this zealous preacher; and arranged that he should be pressed for a soldier. He was carried to Halifax before the commissioners, where the vicar was on the bench; and after vainly remonstrating, was marched off to Bradford, and thrust into a dungeon, for the sole crime of being anxious for God's glory, and the good of mankind. His courage did not for one moment forsake him; friends brought him candles, meat, and water, and sang outside the prison the hymn he was singing within; and his wife came and shouted to him through the key-hole, "Fear not, but trust in God." The indignities he suffered on his way to York were of the most barbarous kind: and wherever he staid for the night, vast crowds came to see him through the grated windows of his goal. Soon after his arrival at York, he was brought before the court; and when the indictment was read, the only charge preferred was, "This is the Methodist preacher, and he refuses to take the service money." No threat could induce him to take the king's coin; and he bore his arms and accoutrements as a cross he was compelled to take up. He still, however, preached, prayed, and distributed Wesley's little books, with as much zeal as ever; for which he was cursed by the ensign of his company, and thrust into prison. Lady Huntingdon used all her influence to obtain his discharge. She was well acquainted with the Dowager Countess of Sunderland, through whom she obtained an interview with her step-son Charles, Earl of Sunderland, who, a short time before, had been promoted to the rank of Brigadier General of His Majesty's forces. His Lordship, after patiently hearing the case, assured her that those for whom she had pleaded should be set at liberty in a few days. She communicated the intelligence to Nelson, through Charles Wesley; and he was released from his captivity, July 28th.

During Lord Huntingdon's life, Ledstone Hall was visited every summer, when numerous meetings were held of a highly interesting character. General convocations of the preachers and exhorters were convened, which were frequently attended by Lady Huntingdon, and Lady Margaret Ingham; special services were held in the church and in the open-air; and a great interest was created among the people for the diffusion of the gospel. Mr. Grimshaw was very zealous on these occasions; and though he encountered much opposition, his determined and undaunted nature enabled him to disarm his enemies, and to effect his purpose. He met with a stout opponent in the vicar of Colne, who, on one occasion, rushed with staff in hand into the house where he was holding a meeting, followed by the constable, and a mob of the lowest rabble; and dragged him and his fellow preachers, Mr. Ingham and Mr. Batty, off as prisoners. They refused to sign a contract not to preach for six months, and were hurried along by their captors, pelted with mud and stones, and had their lives endangered by the clubs of the mob. Mr. Ingham's coat was torn from his back; and the three captives were compelled to remain at an inn till the vicar was pleased to release them.

Lady Huntingdon was shortly after her return from Yorkshire, visited by a severe domestic trial. She was devotedly attached to her children; and it now pleased the Lord to remove two of her beloved sons, George and Ferdinando Hastings, by the small pox, which was then making such fearful ravages in England. They died within a very short period of each other, one aged thirteen and the other aged ten years. Her mind was very deeply affected with her loss, yet her grief was mitigated by the consolations of the gospel. She humbled herself under the bereaving stroke, and was enabled to realize the precious promises which God has given to his people through Christ. Even the dark clouds which surrounded her appeared beautiful, because they reflected so clearly the bow of promise; which only increased in brightness with the intensity of the surrounding darkness.

The revival of religion had now assumed some form and consistence in the land. Many meeting houses had been erected in various places, societies formed and disciplined, rules laid down, lay-preachers admitted, and a regular system of itinerancy established. Several clergymen, who had been aroused by the preaching of Wesley and Whitefield, now came boldly forward, and united themselves with the cause of Methodism. Among these were the Revs. J. Hodges, rector of Wenvo; H. Piers, vicar of Bexley; S. Taylor, vicar of Quintin; C. Manning, vicar of Hayes; V. Perronet, vicar of Shoreham; J. Merriton, from the Isle of Man; and R. T. Bateman, rector of St. Bartholomew's the Great, London. These pious ministers were intimately acquainted with Lady Huntingdon, and were encouraged by her to persevere in their efforts to spread the gospel throughout the land. The first Methodist Conference was held in London, June 25th, 1744; at which there were six clergymen and four travelling preachers present, who were received and hospitably entertained by her Ladyship at her house in London. Her drawing-rooms were thrown open, and the first public services held there, that we have any mention of during Lord Huntingdon's lifetime. John Wesley then preached from the text "What hath God wrought;" and other ministers took part in the service.

Though Lady Huntingdon was warmly attached to the Established Church, she possessed enlightened views of Christianity, and a glowing zeal for the salvation of men.

She was far in advance of her times in catholicity of spirit, and liberality of sentiment; and frequently stimulated the great leaders of Methodism to extend their operations, when they were inclined to restrict their efforts to certain modes of action. She felt a powerful sympathy towards all who loved the Lord Jesus Christ, and formed an acquaintance with many of the pious and distinguished Dissenters. She had been introduced to Dr. Watts by his friend and patroness Lady Abney, and was on terms of intimate friendship with him during the remainder of his life. He often visited her town residence, corresponded with her when in the country, and through the kindness of Lady Abney, enjoyed much of her society at Abney Park. Dr. Doddridge, the renowned author of "*The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*," a work which has been so extensively useful, was also numbered among her intimate friends, and with whom she frequently corresponded. He incurred the censure of his brethren by preaching for Whitefield at the Tabernacle; and even Dr. Watts was inclined to think unkindly of him for it; but the conversation of Lady Huntingdon induced him to commend his efforts to spread everywhere the blessings of salvation. The letters of the Countess to Doddridge, indicate the high opinion she entertained of his abilities and spirituality; and his communications to her show the regard he had for her intellectual powers, her piety, and her generous exertions. In one of them she says, "We want not that friendship which the world has, discovering its degree by the mere outward shows of ceremony; but those hearts who *know* Him that was from the beginning: —by this acquaintance, they can trace back the several other influences upon their minds, besides the secret ones of His to them; and will not wonder such things should help them to maintain an esteem of mankind till a stronger motive supplies its place."

The year 1745 was a period of great anxiety and some danger to those who were concerned for the interests of religion. War was declared between England and France; and the latter power resolved to create a favourable diversion, by landing the young Chevalier to erect the banner of the Pretender in Scotland. A desperate effort was made to restore him to the throne of the exiled Stuarts; and for a time the Jacobite party prevailed. The standard of the young prince was followed by many of the highland nobility; and before the year closed, he had defeated the royal troops in several engagements, taken possession of the principal towns of Scotland, and had advanced into England as far as Derby. During the progress of these events, it was natural that the government should closely watch the movements of the people, and prevent any demonstration of sympathy for the Pretender. The extraordinary proceedings of the Methodists were under the eye of the state. The cabinet was quickly informed, that Whitefield was accustomed to draw thirty thousand persons out of London to hear him preach on Kennington Common, and that nearly as many were collected to hear him on Moorfields; and that Wesley frequently stood on Tower Hill, in the streets of Bristol, among the miners of Cornwall, and the colliers of Kingswood and Newcastle, and addressed vast crowds of people.

The strangest suspicions, and vilest calumnies were industriously circulated respecting the designs of the Methodists. Whitefield was now away in America, and escaped the condemnations which were freely uttered; but Wesley had to bear the whole force of the misrepresentations of his enemies. It was confidently asserted that he was a papist, and kept priests in his house; that he was in league with the Spaniards, and received large sums of money to distribute among the people; and that he was acting in concert with the Pretender! His brother Charles was summoned before the magistrates at Wakefield, and accused of disloyalty. In a prayer, he had supplicated that God would call home "his banished ones;" which was interpreted by his enemies to mean the Pretender. He, however, clearly explained his meaning to the magistrates, who expressed themselves perfectly satisfied with his statement. Even the rank and influence of Lady Huntingdon did not screen her from the base insinuations of the enemies of religion. She was accused of favouring the Pretender; and mobs were collected in the streets near her house, who called out for her Ladyship to appear, and threatened to tear her in pieces if they could seize her person.

These aspersions, which were freely cast on the character of the Methodists, increased the hatred and stimulated the zeal of their persecutors. Every Sunday damnation was denounced against them from the pulpits; mobs broke into their assemblies, and insulted their preachers; and many of the itinerants, sent out by Lady Huntingdon, were ill-treated and beaten. As some of the magistrates refused to interfere, and others condemned the Methodists, Lady Huntingdon addressed a remonstrance to Lord Carteret, one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State; who laid it before the King. It was a fortunate circumstance for the interests of religion, that the throne was occupied by a prince of the House of Hanover. George II. was too wise a sovereign not to perceive where the strength of his throne existed. The high-church party viewed him as an alien; the dissenters treated him as the patron of civil and religious liberty; and he adopted the policy of increasing the privileges of the latter, that they might be a check upon the former. Lady Huntingdon and many of her noble friends, who had joined the Methodists, were well-known at Court as the staunch supporters of the House of Hanover. King George, therefore, caused Lord Carteret to forward to her Ladyship a letter, dated November 19th, 1745, in which he says that the King, as father and protector of his people, will permit no persecution to take place on account of religion; and that all magistrates shall be requested to afford protection to those who require it, in the discharge of their religious observances.

One effect of the persecution, to which the Methodists were exposed, was, to force them to take refuge under the Toleration Act. Yet their position was totally distinct from that for which the Act provided; and a less tolerant monarch might have driven them from it, or forced them to give up what they highly valued. They refused to call themselves *Dissenters*, and professed a warm, and devoted attachment to the Establishment; they believed her articles, retained her liturgy and ceremonies, communed at her tables; and professed that they were the strictest members of the Church, because they were anxious to restore her to her former dignity and usefulness. The intentions of the King were soon made known throughout the nation: and although petty magistrates, inflamed by a godless clergy, sometimes refused to afford redress to the persecuted, the superior courts were ordered by the government to punish with severity all who insulted or injured the Methodists.

Lady Huntingdon spent part of the summer of 1745 at Clifton, and was unremitting in her exertions for the diffusion of the truth. In August the second Methodist Conference was held at Bristol; which was attended by three clergymen, the Revs. John Hodges, rector of Wenvo, John and Charles Wesley, and seven travelling preachers. Her Ladyship formed an acquaintance with these apostolic labourers, particularly with Messrs. Richards, Meyrick and Moss, whom she invited to follow her to Bath, whither she retired for a short period. These three preachers were great favourites with Lady Huntingdon; and, after they left Wesley's societies, were episcopally ordained through her interest.

At the commencement of 1746 the storm which had threatened to overturn the house of Hanover, and bring back the Stuarts and despotism, had nearly blown over. The Chevalier, disappointed at his failure, returned to Scotland, where every day his position became more critical. Lady Huntingdon exerted all her influence in the cause of civil and religious freedom; and from the pulpits of the Methodists, stirring sermons were preached against the insurgents. The dissenters were also zealous in their concern for the safety of the throne; and Dr. Doddridge assisted, as far as possible, to induce his people to enlist. John Wesley preached at Newcastle to the English army, and was made very useful to many of the soldiers. At length the fatal battle of Culloden, April 16th, put an end to the wild schemes of the Pretender, and restored peace to the United Kingdon. It was in this struggle that the intimate friend of Lady Huntingdon, Colonel Gardiner, perished, of whom Dr. Doddridge has written such an interesting memoir. The Doctor preached an eloquent sermon on his death, which he afterwards published, and sent her Ladyship one hundred copies for distribution. The Countess deplored his death, yet rejoiced in the thought that he was fully prepared for it, and that he was realizing what was still to her the object of faith. She pays a graceful tribute to his memory, in a long letter to John Wesley, and also records her praise of the author of the discourse. "Eminently successful in illuminating multitudes, in various parts of the country, with the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, the soul of this excellent minister of Christ is ever burning for a more extensive advancement of religion, where it is not yet known, or its blessed effects felt by the people. He would do honour to any age of the Church, and his honesty and zeal entitle him to unqualified praise."

In the month of April, Lady Huntingdon was attacked by a serious illness which brought on fever, and greatly alarmed her friends; but by the skill of her medical attendants, and the blessing of God, she was restored to health and strength. While she was suffering from such debility that she could hardly hold a pen, she wrote to the Wesleys and Dr. Doddridge for their assistance in a fresh attempt to spread the gospel in the neighbourhood of her mansion. She had lately taken a young clergyman, the Rev. G..Baddelley, D.D., into her family as her domestic chaplain; and feeling great interest in his welfare, had presented to him the rectory of Markfield. He gained the affection of his people, and by the desire of the Countess, conducted a little meeting in the mansion; which, though greatly opposed at first, became increasingly useful. He was very anxious to meet with a pious minister to supply his place whenever he was absent; and her Ladyship wrote to her ministerial friends, and requested them to look out for a suitable person to be his curate. He would have an entrance into four churches, and to officiate as her chaplain; and by their united efforts, Lady Huntingdon cherished the hope that the gospel would be widely diffused in Leicestershire, and great good effected.

Lady Huntingdon had scarcely recovered from the loss of her children, and from her own illness, before she was bereaved of her husband, who died at his house in Downing-Street, Westminster, October 13th, 1746. This was a severe blow to her Ladyship; but she realized the power of the gospel to console and support in the time of trouble. Never was there a better father, a kinder brother, a more tender husband, and a more indulgent master. He always yielded to the wishes of the Countess; and though a stranger to the divine happiness she enjoyed, he rejoiced in seeing her full of joy. He was buried with his ancestors in the old church of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, where the following epitaph, from the pen of Lord Bolingbroke, may be seen. It is not more honourable to the Earl than to the widow; it records the domestic character of the Countess, and exhibits the majesty and loveliness of genuine piety; and is the more remarkable, as it emanated from the pen of a sceptic, who, by his intimacy with the family, had witnessed all that he has expressed on the tablet.

"Here lie the remains of the Right Honourable Theophilus, Earl of Huntingdon, Lord Hastings, Hungerford, Botreaux, Moels, Newmark, and Molins. If his death deserved respect, his life deserved it more. If he derived his title from a long roll of illustrious ancestors, he reflected back on them superior honours. He ennobled nobility by virtue. He was of the first rank in both; good in every relation of natural duty and social life. The learning he acquired at school, he improved at Oxford, under the care of that excellent person, the late Bishop of Gloucester. Acquainted by his studies with the characters of past ages, he acquired by his travels a knowledge of the men and manners of his own; he visited France, Italy, and even Spain. After these excursions into other countries, he settled in his own. His own was dear to him. No man had juster notions of the true constitution of her government; no man had a more comprehensive view of her real interests, domestic and foreign. Capable of excelling in every form of public life, he chose to appear in none. His mind fraught with knowledge, his heart elevated with sentiments of an unaffected patriotism, he looked down from higher ground on the low level of a futile and corrupt generation. Despairing to do national good, he mingled as little as his rank permitted in national affairs. Home is the refuge of a wise man's life; home was the refuge of his. By his marriage with the Lady Selina Shirley, second daughter, and one of the co-heirs of Washington, Earl Ferrars, he secured to himself, in retreat, a scene of happiness he could not have found in the world; the uninterupted joys of conjugal love, the never failing comforts of cordial friendship. Every care was softened, every satisfaction heightened, every hour passed smoothly away, in the company of one who enjoyed a perpetual serenity of soul, that none but those can feel in this life who are prepared for greater bliss in the next. By her, this monument is erected, to record the virtues of the deceased, and the grief of the living. He was born November 12th, 1696, and married the said Lady, June 3rd, 1728. By her he had four sons and three daughters, Francis, the present Earl, born March 13th, 1729; George, born March 29th, 1730, who died of the small-pox, aged fourteen; Ferdinando, born January 23rd, 1732, who also died of the small-pox, aged eleven; Elizabeth, the eldest daughter, born March 23d, 1731; Selina, born June 1735, who died an infant; Selina, the third daughter, born December 3rd, 1737. The said Earl died of a fit of apoplexy, October 13th, 1746, in the fiftieth year of his age."

CHAPTER V. A. D. 1746—1748.

THE ZEAL AND LIBERALITY OF LADY HUNTINGDON.—HER FAMILY.—ILL-HEALTH.—VISIT TO LONDON.—DR. POTTER, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.—BATH.—LADY HUNTINGDON IN WALES.—WHITEFIELD APPOINTED HER CHAPLAIN—PREACHES IN HER DRAWING-ROOMS—HIS SUCCESS AMONG THE NOBILITY.—LORD BOLINGBROKE.—LADY SUFFOLK.—SOCIAL PRAYER-MEETING AMONG NOBLE LADIES.—THE DEVIL'S CASTAWAYS.

The death of Lord Huntingdon formed a new era in the life of the Countess. The losses she had sustained deeply chastened her spirit, and led her to fix her affections more entirely on Christ. She became dead to the world; she placed a fine bust of herself upon the tomb of her deceased husband; and to the latest period of her life, she treasured up his memory in her widowed bosom. She did not give way to unavailing grief, nor shut herself up in seclusion; but devoted herself to the discharge of those duties which demanded her attention, and sought relief in active exertion for the salvation of men. His Lordship had such esteem for her character, that he committed to her the entire management of his children and their fortunes; which she carefully attended to, and improved with great fidelity. During his lifetime, her means of usefulness were very circumscribed. Her family and domestic concerns necessarily took up much of her time; and her attendance on her husband prevented her doing as much good as she desired to do. Her pecuniary resources were not large; yet all she possessed was expended in promoting the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom, and in relieving the temporal distresses of the indigent. She was thoroughly unostentatious in her benevolent exertions; her general mode of life was retired; her charities were principally distributed through her chaplains; her gifts and donations were rarely made public; yet in a long life of self-denial, she devoted upwards of *One Hundred Thousand Pounds* towards the spread of Evangelical religion. To her may be applied the language of a beautiful writer;—"She was seen wherever disappointment and losses had left nothing but the attractions of misery. She and the selfish crew were sure to meet very near the door; *they* leaving their friends when they found nothing more was to be enjoyed, and *she* hastening thither as soon as she found something was necessary to be done."

Lady Huntingdon was now in the thirty-ninth year of her age, and she solemnly dedicated herself, her time, her talents, and her substance to the Lord. She renounced the ease and splendour of noble rank for the service of her Saviour. She mingled with the world only that she might be useful in saving souls; and exerted all the influence she possessed to secure greater triumphs to the gospel. Her own piety was bright and shining; the purity and devotion of her zeal were most strikingly displayed; and no one could remain long in her presence without being warmed with the burning love which glowed within her soul. She spent the first six months of her widowhood at Donnington Park, which she continued to occupy till the young Earl of Huntingdon became of age. She interested herself in the welfare of the members of her little societies around her, and directed her exertions to increase their number, their piety, and their usefulness. She enjoyed at this season of affliction the consolations of many distinguished friends. Sir John

Thorold was the early and steady friend of the late Earl, and a man of genuine piety. The painful task of consigning the remains of his Lordship was intrusted to him; and he manifested a lively interest in the affairs of the Countess and her children. He deeply sympathized with her in her bereavement, wrote a very affectionate letter of condolence with her, and prayed that every divine support and comfort might be abundantly administered to her, and every blessing rest on the young and interesting family. Letters were received from most of her friends; especially from Dr. Doddridge, for whom she cherished great affection. Her reply to him indicates the heavenly state of mind she enjoyed at this period, and her zeal in the service of her Master. In one of her letters she says,

"How do I lament the weakness of my hands, the feebleness of my knees, and coolness of my heart. I want it on fire always, not for self-delight, but to spread the gospel from pole to pole. Pray for me, my very excellent friend, and cause others to do so. I dread slack hands in the vineyard; we must be all up and doing; the Lord is at hand; and let us not lose the things we have wrought, but labour and exhort each other to diligence and faithfulness. O! my friend, we shall reap plentifully if we faint not."

Dr. Doddridge had given to her ladyship an account of the academy which he had long established for the education of young men for the ministry. The Countess greatly encouraged the work, and offered to support one there, if he knew of a youth who might be deemed fit for the ministry. He wrote to her, and assured her that he had great hopes of finding a suitable candidate; and in her reply, dated March 15th, 1747, she says, "What contribution will be wanting from me toward this purpose, I beg you will let me know, and my excellent friend may depend upon my gratitude for this high honour vouchsafed me; I feel my mite is cast into the treasury of God; and O, inexpressible consolation! that he in his love is sending these calls to poor, vile and unworthy me. My heart wants nothing so much as to dispense *all—all* for the glory of Him whom my soul loveth." Her health was at this time in a very delicate state; which, though it did not alarm her, created great uneasiness in the minds of her family, and especially of her sister, Lady Kilmorey. They advised her to obtain medical advice, and Dr. Doddridge recommended to her Dr. Stonhouse, an eminent physician then in the height of his practice at Northampton. She consented to their solicitations, and requested that, whenever she should be so ill as to be thought in any danger, he was to be the only person sent for. Her own mind was calm and joyful; the thought of her departure was associated with that of her happiness; and she frequently said, "I look to that bed which promises me a refuge from an evil world, and from a yet more evil heart. Death is called a monster, a king of terrors, but as a Gabriel's salutation shall my soul meet him; he can bring no other message to the redeemed in Christ, but, 'Hail thou who art highly favoured of the Lord.'"

Lady Huntingdon went to London, towards the end of the summer; and her sister, Lady Kilmorey, departed for Shropshire. Lady Huntingdon had for some years enjoyed the friendship of Dr. Potter, now Archbishop of Canterbury, who frequently visited her, and affectionately endeavoured to console her bereaved heart. When Bishop of Oxford, he viewed the rise of Methodism with great repugnance; but towards the close of his life, his feelings towards its leaders were very favourable; and there can be no doubt that the change must be attributable to his long intimacy with her. After a partial restoration, her health began to decline, and Dr. Stonhouse was accordingly sent for. His efforts to reduce her complaint were unavailing; and he strongly recommended her to visit Bath, for the benefit of the waters. Before she left London, she called on the Archbishop, who was then in his seventy-fifth year, and in a precarious state of health. She spoke to him with great tenderness and fidelity of the near approach of that event which would terminate their earthly friendship. The Archbishop appeared deeply affected, and when parting, took her hand, and said with evident feeling, "May the Lord God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob bless thee!" The Countess spent a few days with her sister in Shropshire, and then hastened to Bath. Not long after her departure from London, the Archbishop wrote to her a short note, stating that he was very well, and that he hoped the Bath waters had recruited her health, and asking an interest in her prayers. After he had written it, he was walking with it to his secretaire, when being suddenly seized with a fit, he dropped upon the floor, and expired with the note in his hand!

During her Ladyship's stay at Bath, she corresponded with her ministerial friends, as far as her strength would permit, and cheered them on in their labours, and warmed their hearts with the love and zeal of her own. She cherished the deepest humility, and cast her whole dependence upon Christ. "I am nothing; Christ is all; I disclaim, as well as disdain any righteousness but his. I not only rejoice that there is no wisdom for his people but that from above, but reject every pretension to any but what comes from himself. I want no holiness he does not give me, and I could not accept a heaven he did not prepare me for; I can wish for no liberty, but what he likes for me, and I am satisfied with every misery he does not redeem me from; that in all things I may feel that without him I can do nothing." Her family then consisted of two sons and two daughters, and she watched over them with maternal anxiety, and fervently prayed for their salvation. Her time was divided between her social duties, and her pious exertions to do good; and was jealously watched lest any portion of it should pass unoccupied. She was a diligent student; and by her painful experience had gained clear views of truth, and of the ceaseless workings of the human spirit. The gospel was her most delightful study and the more she drank of its waters, the clearer and deeper were her views of the spirit and liberality of the Christian religion. She endeavoured to carry out its principles in her intercourse with the world and the church. She examined the peculiarities of the Dissenters, and of the Church of England; and deliberately decided that it was her duty to adhere to the latter. She, however, was no bigot, but encouraged all holy ministers, who were anxious to save souls and promote the interests of religion, though they might differ from her on many minor points. The society of worthy ministers was courted by her; and with many of them she became intimate, kept up a regular correspondence, and invited them to her house. She respected the conscientious scruples they cherished, and did everything in her power to assist them in their labours, and to foster the spirit of piety and unity among them.

In the month of May, 1748, Lady Huntingdon and her daughters, accompanied by Lady Anne and Lady Frances Hastings, left Bath on a tour through Wales. Her attention had been often directed to this interesting sphere of labour. Howell Harris had created a great stir among the people by his energetic labours; Whitefield had frequently preached to them the startling truths of the gospel; and many of the clergy had been stimulated by the word of life, and were co-operating with the Methodists. The position and influence of Lady Huntingdon, and her well-known sentiments, induced the Welsh preachers to invite her to a people, remarkable for their simplicity, earnestness, and gratitude. The Countess was met at Bristol by four celebrated Welsh ministers; the well-known Howell Harris; Griffith Jones, rector of Llandowrer; Daniel Rowlands, rector of Llangeitto; and Howel Davis, rector of Prengast. These preachers accompanied her Ladyship into the principality. They travelled by easy stages; and for fifteen days two of the ministers preached daily in some town or village through which they passed, and scattered the seed of divine truth. It was surprising to see the readiness with which the people left their occupations to hear the glad news, and the deep attention they paid to the preaching of the gospel.

On her Ladyship's arrival at Trevecca in Brecknockshire, the spot which twenty years after became her chief residence, and the centre of her sphere of action, the party was joined by several of the awakened clergymen, some pious and laborious dissenting ministers, and many exhorters or lay-preachers. The place quickly became the scene of a wonderful excitement; crowds were attracted by the rank and character of the Countess from all parts of the country; the ministers preached four or five times a day to immense congregations; and the Spirit of God wrought powerfully on the hearts of the hearers. On one occasion Griffith Jones preached in a large field, from the text, "What shall I cry?" when many were so powerfully convinced of their guilt and misery, that they cried out with agonizing earnestness. On the conclusion of the sermon, Lady Huntingdon mingled with the crowd, and asked them the cause of their loud cries; and most of them answered that they were so deeply convinced of their awful condition in the sight of God, that they were afraid he would never extend his mercy to them. On another occasion, when Mr. Rowlands was preaching, the Spirit applied the word with such power to the heart, that believers were so enraptured that they burst out into praises and rejoicing, while sinners cried out with heartfelt distress, "Men and brethren, what shall we do!" Lady Huntingdon shortly after left Wales, accompanied by Howell Harris and Howell Davis, and arrived in London June 15th, 1748. Her efforts in the principality had been made very useful; her own spirit had been greatly refreshed; her interest in the welfare of the Welsh people had been largely increased; and she ever looked back upon this visit to them with feelings of devout gratitude.

The Countess now became the avowed patroness of all the zealous clergy of the Church of England, and sheltered them, as far as she was able, from the obloquy and persecution to which they were exposed. Her correspondence with the Welsh ministers, and many of the friends of Whitefield, opened to her mind views of divine truth, which appeared to her more consonant to the Scriptures than those she had formerly held; and from this period she became more intimately connected with ministers and Christians of the Calvinistic sentiments, which she believed, with Lord Chatham, harmonized with the natural sense of the Articles of the Church of England. She held these opinions, with great tenacity, to the day of her death; though her heart was ever ready to welcome all whom she believed to be real Christians, whatever their denomination; and her mansion at Chelsea, and its hospitality were always open to the faithful minister of the cross. Dr. Doddridge, who was now in London, often visited her, and enjoyed the kind and friendly hospitality of her house. In a letter to his wife, he gives a beautiful picture of the inmates of this mansion. He says:—

"I can conclude with telling you that I am now come to the conclusion of one of the most pleasant days I shall ever spend without you. After an hour's charming conversation with Lady Huntingdon and Mrs. Edwin,* I preached in the family, by express desire, and met Colonel Gumley, who is really a second Colonel Gardiner. Such a monument of the power and sovereignty of divine grace, as, truly, I have hardly met with, since I was acquainted with his story. After dinner, the ladies entertained us with their voices and a harpsichord, with which I was highly delighted; and I have stolen a hymn, which I steadfastly believe to be written by good Lady Huntingdon, and which I shall not fail to communicate to you. * * * * * * * * *

"Lady Huntingdon is quite a mother to the poor; she visits them and prays with them in their sickness; and they leave their children to her for a legacy when they die, and she takes care of them. I was really astonished at the traces of religion I discovered in her and Mrs. Edwin, and cannot but glorify God for them. More cheerfulness I never saw intermingled with devotion."

George Whitefield arrived in England in July, 1748 after an absence of four years in America, where his labours had been abundantly blessed by God. Lady Huntingdon frequently attended his ministry, was personally acquainted with him, and had occasionally interchanged letters with him. Though her former sentiments and associations attracted her rather to Wesley, Whitefield entertained a high opinion of her piety and abilities; and in his letters speaks of her in very flattering terms. He says, "She shines brighter and brighter every day, and will yet I trust be spared for a nursing-mother to our Israel," and he prays "the God of all grace to keep her steadfast in the faith, and make her a burning and a shining light in our British Israel." As she was now able to sympathise more fully with the sentiments of this distinguished man, she requested Howell Harris to bring him to her house at Chelsea, as soon as he came ashore. Whitefield preached twice in her drawing-rooms, and shortly after, she wrote to him that several of the nobility desired to hear him at her house. He replied the next day, August 21st,

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* The wife of John Edwin, Esq., a distinguished M. P., and sister-in law of Lady Charlotte Edwin.

"I have received your Ladyship's letter last night, and write this to inform you that I am quite willing to comply with your invitation. As I am to preach, God willing, at St. Bartholomew's on Wednesday evening, I will wait upon you the next morning, and spend the whole day at Chelsea. Blessed be God that the rich and great begin to have hearing ears. I think that it is a good sign that our Lord intends to give to some, at least, an obedient heart. Surely your Ladyship and Madam Edwin are only the first fruits. May you increase and multiply! I believe you will. How wonderfully does our Redeemer deal with souls. If they will hear the Gospel only under a ceiled roof, ministers shall be sent to them there. If only in a church or a field, they shall have it there."

On the day appointed, a distinguished circle of the nobility assembled to hear the talented preacher. Whitefield was in his thirty-fourth year, and though somewhat care-worn with toil and exposure to the weather, was a most commanding person. His stature was well proportioned, his manners graceful, his features regular and expressive, his countenance exquisitely sweet and placid. His oratory was singularly bold and engaging; his small dark blue eyes sparkled with the animation of his soul: and his marvellous voice possessed such melody and compass, that it could either drive the audience into the most fearful state of alarm, or thrill it with feelings of compassion, gratitude, or love. It is not to be wondered at that, having once heard him, they desired to hear him again. He says, "On Tuesday I preached twice at Lady

Huntingdon's to several of the nobility. In the morning the Earl of Chesterfield was present; in the evening Lord Bolingbroke. All behaved quite well, and were in some degree affected. Lord Chesterfield thanked me, and said, 'Sir, I will not tell you what I shall tell others, how I approve of you,' or words to this purpose. He conversed with me freely afterwards. Lord Bolingbroke was much moved, and desired I would come and see him the next morning. I did; and his Lordship behaved with great candour and frankness. All accepted of my sermons, and seemed surprised but pleased."

The religious sentiments and the glowing eloquence of Whitefield so attracted the attention of Lady Huntingdon, that she greatly desired to secure his services, and offered him the honourable office of chaplain to her Ladyship. He thus replied, September 1st, to her letter, in which she had promised him her scarf and her patronage.

"Although it is time for me to be setting out, yet I dare not leave town without dropping a few lines gratefully to acknowledge the many favours I have received from your Ladyship, especially the honour you have done me in making me one of your Ladyship's chaplains. A sense of it humbles me, and makes me to pray more intensely for more grace, to walk more worthy of that God who has called me to his kingdom and glory. As your Ladyship hath been pleased to confer on me the honour before mentioned, I shall think it my duty to send you weekly accounts of what the Lord Jesus is pleased to do for and by me. Glory be to his great name, the prospect is promising. My Lord Bath received me yesterday morning very cordially and would give me five guineas for the orphans, though I refused taking anything for the books. I send your Ladyship a little box of my sermons, and the last account of God's dealing with me. * * * I hope God intends to honour your Ladyship in making you instrumental of doing good to the nobility.

His providence, his peculiar providence hath placed your Ladyship at Chelsea. I am persuaded you will not quit that post, till he, that hath placed you there, plainly gives you a dismission."

His appointment to the chaplaincy, and his preaching to large numbers of the nobility at her mansion, increased the popularity of Whitefield, though it did not divert him from his usual sphere of labour. He never flattered the rich, nor succumbed to the high; but while he respected their station, and honoured them with their appropriate titles, he faithfully warned them of their danger, and affectionately encouraged their souls. Few took offence at his preaching; except the Bishop of London, who commenced proceedings against the Rev. Mr. Bateman, for permitting him to preach so frequently in St. Bartholomew's church. In September, he again visited Scotland where great multitudes flocked to hear him, though some of the clergy attempted in the Presbytery to exclude him from the pulpit, by maligning his character. He was greatly pleased to find that many of the soldiers lately returned from Flanders were pious persons; he stimulated their faith and love, and formed them into a little society at Edinburgh. Some of these devoted soldiers became known to Colonel Gumly, who introduced them to the notice of Lady Huntingdon. She took a deep interest in their welfare, and was surprised to find such powerful faith and a devotional spirit among these hardy men.

With the intention of giving Whitefield a wider field of usefulness, the Countess removed from Chelsea to town, and opened her house in Park-Street for the preaching of the gospel. She then, and for many years after, thought that, as a peeress of the realm, she had an indisputable right to employ the ministers of the Church, whom she had appointed as her chaplains, in openly proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation. Whitefield, therefore, having returned from Scotland, commenced his ministry at her

Ladyship's residence early in November, and continued to preach there twice a week, during the winter, to a large circle of the nobility. In his letters, dated November 10th, he says, "Good Lady Huntingdon is come to town, and I am to preach at her Ladyship's house twice a week to the great and noble. O that some of them may be effectually called, and taste of the riches of redeeming love!" "About thirty have desired to come, and I suppose they will bring thirty more. I have heard of two or three more dear Christians among the great ones. I know you will pray the Lord of all lords to increase their number. Her Ladyship hath a great regard for all those in Scotland, who stand up for vital religion. She intends to send you down the picture of poor Aaron, the late negro preacher."

Many of the highly distinguished nobility were brought to hear the truth through the influence of Lady Huntingdon. The Earl of Chesterfield, Lord Bolingbroke, Lord Bath, Lady Townshend, Lady Thanet, and many of those attached to the Prince of Wales' court, constantly attended the ministry of Whitefield. Lady Rockingham, a woman of very superior talents and accomplishments, and cousin to Lady Huntingdon, was often present at these drawing-room services, accompanied by her daughter Lady Monson. She possessed an extensive acquaintance, and exerted great influence at court; and she embraced every opportunity of recommending religion to the serious attention of the great. Lord Bolingbroke was so deeply impressed with Whitefield's appeals, that he once said to the Countess, "You may command my pen when you will; it shall be drawn in your service:—for admitting the Bible to be true, I shall have little apprehension of maintaining the doctrines of predestination and grace, against all your revilers." He had a high opinion of Whitefield, and says of him, "He is the most extraordinary man in our times. He has the most commanding eloquence I ever heard in any person; his abilities are very considerable; his zeal unquenchable; and his piety and excellence genuine—unquestionable." His family was on terms of great intimacy with Lady Huntingdon; and his brother Lord St. John was frequently at her residence, and derived much good from the sermons of her chaplain. A few months after, he was taken suddenly ill; and his Lady wrote in great alarm to the Countess to send to him some pious clergyman, as he wished to receive the sacrament before his death, which was then hourly expected. Mr. Bateman was with her Ladyship when the letter came; and he immediately hurried to the bed of the dying man. His Lordship grasped his hand, and expressed how much he was indebted to Lady Huntingdon and Whitefield for the peace he enjoyed. The holy minister read and prayed with him; conversed about spiritual affairs; and at the request of Lady St. John, remained watching the departure of the spirit. His Lordship said that all his hope was on Christ; and then gently passed away, while Mr. Bateman was engaged in prayer on his behalf. Lord Bolingbroke felt the decease of his brother very keenly, and was much impressed with his language in his last moments. Many were the fevent prayers which the Countess offered for his conversion. In a letter to Whitefield she says, "O that the obdurate heart of this desperate infidel may yet be shook to its very centre; may his eyes be opened by the illuminating influence of Divine truth; and may the Lord Jesus Christ be revealed to his heart as the hope of glory and immortal bliss hereafter! I tremble for his destiny; he is a singularly awful character; and I am fearfully alarmed lest that Gospel, which he so heartily despises, yet affects to reverence, should prove eventually the savour of death unto death to his immortal soul."

Some of the nobility, however, were highly incensed at the conduct of Lady Huntingdon, and the preaching of Whitefield. The celebrated Countess of Suffolk had been prevailed upon by Lady Rockingham to visit her, and hear her popular chaplain. He was not aware of her presence; but the truth preached was so peculiarly adapted to her circumstances, that it seemed as if pointedly addressed to her. She managed to sit quiet until the service was concluded; and Whitefield had scarcely retired, before she flew into a violent passion, abused Lady Huntingdon to her face, and denounced the sermon as a deliberate attack upon herself. In vain her sister-in-law Lady Betty Germain tried to appease the beautiful fury, and to explain the mistake;—in vain her relatives, Lady Eleanor Bertie, and the Duchess Dowager of Ancaster, commanded her silence;—she still maintained that she had been insulted. She was, however, compelled to apologize to the Countess, which she did with a very bad grace, and then turned away with the bitter feelings of wounded pride. Lord Chesterfield paid such marked attention to this Lady Suffolk, that he offended the Queen and was dismissed from his office of Lord High Steward. Lady Huntingdon deeply regretted the course he had adopted, and used every exertion to induce him to follow a better line of policy. She faithfully pointed to him the error of his ways; and he received her admonitions with such patient attention, that she cherished the hope that he, with Lord Bolingbroke, would at length be brought to the feet of Jesus.

It was pleasing to trace how widely the influence of Lady Huntingdon was extending, and how much real good was effected by the services held at her house. She became acquainted with some of the pious Scotch nobility, who had been converted by the labours of Whitefield in their own land, and who came to London to attend to their parliamentary duties. They often visited at her Ladyship's mansion, and prevailed upon many among their acquaintance to accompany them. Never, however, will it be fully seen, till the last day, how extensively the power of the piety of the Countess was felt among all ranks. The most remarkable circumstance in these dark and profligate times, was the establishment by several ladies among the nobility, of a meeting for prayer and reading the Scriptures, which was held alternately at each other's houses. It continued to be well attended and very useful for many years. They stimulated each other's faith, animated each other's zeal, and allured each other to higher attainments in divine grace. They set an example to a gay and frivolous nobility, which commanded respect, even where it did not produce any greater result. Lady Huntingdon watched the progress of these events with great satisfaction; and in her letters, gives a most flattering prospect of the success of the gospel. "Religion," she says, "was never, I believe, so much the subject of conversation as now." The great and the noble flocked in large parties to hear Whitefield, at her residence; and were charmed with his eloquence, and impressed with the truth. Many were induced to seek the Lord; honourable women owned the power and purity of the gospel; the mansions of the rich resounded with the praises of Jesus Christ; and the company, invited to their houses, spent the time, which had formerly been devoted to feasting or pleasure, in singing and praying, and reading the Scriptures. Lady Huntingdon was more than a mother to the new converts. She watched over them with an observant eye, instructed them in the truth, consoled them in their trials, and cheered them to persevere in their work by her frequent epistles.

While the Countess was thus promoting the spiritual interests of the rich, she was not unmindful of the claims of the poor around her. On the Sabbath days, her drawing-rooms were crowded by brilliant assemblies to hear the word of life; and on the week-days, her kitchen was filled with the poor, whose wants she relieved, and to whom the gospel was simply proclaimed. Like her gifted chaplain, she was equally adapted to converse with the most polished society in the saloon, and to secure the attention of the poor by her piety and love. Whitefield had his trophies among the highest and the lowest. It is said that Lady Huntingdon once invited some ladies to hear him preach, who had never heard him before. They attended the place where he was preaching on the Lord's day evening; and the next morning called on her Ladyship. She inquired if they had heard him, and they replied, "O my Lady, he is the most strange and unaccountable preacher we ever heard. Among other preposterous things, he declared that Jesus Christ was so willing to receive sinners, that he did not object to receive even the *devil's castaways!* Now, my Lady, did you ever hear of such a thing since you were born?" The Countess replied that it certainly appeared rather singular, but as Mr. Whitefield was in the parlour, she would call him, and let him answer for himself. On his entering the room, she informed him of the charge the ladies had brought against him. Her chaplain replied, "I certainly must plead guilty of the charge; whether I did what was right or otherwise, your Ladyship shall judge from the following circumstance:—Did your Ladyship notice, about half an hour ago, a very modest single rap at the door? It was given by a poor, miserable-looking, aged female, who requested to speak with me. I desired her to be shown into the parlour, when she thus accosted me:—'I believe Sir, you preached last evening at such a chapel?' 'Yes, I did.' 'Ah, Sir, I was accidentally passing the door of that chapel, and hearing the voice of some one preaching, I did what I have never been in the habit of doing—I went in; and one of the first things I heard you say was, that Jesus Christ was so willing to receive sinners, that he did not object to receiving the devil's castaways. Now Sir, I have been a great sinner for many years, and am so worn out in his service that I think I may with truth be called one of the devil's castaways. Do you think, Sir, that Jesus Christ would receive me?' I assured her there was not a doubt of it, if she was but willing to go to him." The ladies eagerly listened; and relinquished their charges.

It afterwards appeared that this poor soul was savingly converted; and Lady Huntingdon was informed, on good authority, that she departed this life, rejoicing in the glorious declaration that, "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." How many of the poor and of the rich are now praising the sovereign grace of God, which raised up such mighty instruments to scatter the darkness which had fallen on the land; to snatch them from the paths of sin, whether in high or low life; and to introduce them to the blessings of salvation. "Let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his ways, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

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CHAPTER VI. A. D. 1748—1750.

THE PROTECTOR OF THE PERSECUTED.—BISHOP OF EXETER. —WELSH PERSECUTION.—CATHOLICITY OF LADY HUNTINGDON.—HER ELDEST DAUGHTER.—THE COUNTESS AT BRISTOL.—THE GOAL PRISONERS.—THE TABERNACLE.— EARL OF HUNTINGDON.—IRISH PERSECUTION.—ASHBY: —EFFORTS OF LADY HUNTINGDON THERE.—THE COUNTESS DELITZ.—LADY HOTHAM.—LADY FANNY SHIRLEY. A LEADER WANTED.—UNION OF WESLEY AND WHITEFIELD.—MR. THOMPSON.—EARTHQUAKE IN LONDON.

LADY Huntingdon had now fully started on her honourable and useful career. Every year her labours became more extended, and her self-denying efforts more multiplied, till she entered into her rest. Her soul was filled with love to Christ, and sympathy towards a sinful world. She thoroughly comprehended the position in which Providence had placed her; and with great clearness of perception, and confidence, she pressed all her talents, influence, and wealth into her service, to diffuse the knowledge of Christ. She heeded not the sarcasms or witticisms of the gay, nor the stern opposition of the world. The anathema of worldly-minded priests fell powerless upon her; the fear of man was unknown to her courageous breast; and she could dare the spirit of persecution to do its utmost to those who were animated with like precious faith. She cast the shield of protection around her own ministers; the cry of the oppressed, when re-echoed from her own heart, obtained relief from the highest authorities; and when she journeyed through the country, her very name was sufficient to strike terror into the enemies of the cross, and to attract thousands to see the illustrious lady.

Her Ladyship was very jealous of the reputation of her chaplain, and took stringent measures to vindicate him from certain accusations which Lavington, Bishop of Exeter, made against Whitefield and Wesley. He delivered a charge to his clergy; and a printer soon after circulated a pamphlet as the address of the Bishop, which contained a statement of doctrines, that caused him to be stigmatized as a Methodist. The angry prelate published a declaration, accusing the Methodist leaders of the fraud, and loading them with calumny and reproach. The character of Whitefield was thoroughly vindicated by a friend of the Bishop; who, however, had not the candour to acquit him of the malignant charges he had preferred. Lady Huntingdon wrote to his Lordship, and demanded a candid and honourable renunciation of the aspersions cast upon her chaplain; and in her letter she enclosed an acknowledgment on the part of the printer, that he received the manuscript from one entirely unconnected with the Methodists, and that he alone was responsible for the publication. The Bishop took no notice of her communication; which drew from her Ladyship a spirited letter, stating that, unless he withdrew his charge against Whitefield and Wesley, she was determined to make the whole transaction public. This had the desired effect; for on the next day, he sent to her a recantation of the charges made against them, and expressed his regret at having unjustly wounded their feelings, and exposed them to the odium of the world. Her Ladyship was well aware of the crafty character of her opponent, and published this concession in the leading journals of the day. The Bishop thought that she would have been satisfied with the mere private communication, and that his public denunciation of the Methodists would still be intact; and his indignation scarcely knew any bounds when he read his humiliation in print. The Countess had no other end to serve but the interests of religion; and she thus proclaimed to the world, that she would never suffer injustice and oppression to trample down the zealous ministers of Christ.

Lady Huntingdon was greatly pained when she heard of the persecution which many of the Welsh magistrates inflicted on the Methodists. Howell Harris was doing a very great work in the principality. He says in one of his letters,

> "It is now about nine weeks since I began to go round South and North Wales, and this week I returned home. I have visited, in that time, thirteen counties, travelled about one hundred and fifty miles every week, and discoursed twice a day, occasionally three or four times. In this last journey I have not taken off my clothes for seven nights together, being obliged to meet the people, and discourse at midnight, or very early in the morning, to avoid persecution. One man, near Wrexham, the week before I went thither, was obliged to pay twenty shillings to Sir W. W. Wynn, several of the hearers five shillings; and one of them, who had paid that sum before, was now fined ten shillings. This is the third time the poor people have been so served in that neighbourhood for assembling together. Near the town of Bala, were I was formerly like to be murdered, I had a severe blow on my head, but received no hurt. I never saw such crowds coming to hear; many hearts and doors have been opened lately; we know of several who had been awakened; and many speak with delight in coming to hear Mr. Whitefield when he visits us again."

The gentlemen hunted these poor Christians like partridges, but Sir W. W. Wynn was intolerably bitter against them. As soon as Lady Huntingdon was acquainted with the sufferings of her Welsh friends, she immediately laid the particulars before the government. The matter was investigated; and to the great chagrin of Sir W. W. Wynn and his coadjutors, the different sums, which had been exacted from the Methodists, were ordered to be returned. He vowed to execute vengeance upon every member of the society in Denbighshire; but before many months had passed, he was summoned to the future world, by the effects of a fall from his horse! The protection and influence of the Countess formed an invaluable aid to the various ministers who were promoting the revival of religion, and was gratefully remembered by all who enjoyed its benefits.

Early in December 1748, Whitefield made an excursion to Gloucester and Bristol, where he preached to very great multitudes. He proposed to extend his tour into Cornwall; but a letter from Lady Huntingdon summoned him immediately to London. He remained in the metropolis about six weeks, preaching regularly to crowded and brilliant assemblies at her Ladyship's mansion, and wherever else he had an opportunity. His letters, written during this period, are full of references to the good he was effecting among the great. Thus to Dr. Doddridge, to whom he had submitted his journals for correction, before reprinting them, he writes, "Blessed be God, the prospect is promising. Last Sunday evening I preached to a most brilliant assembly indeed; they expressed great approbation, and some, I think, begin to feel. Good Lady Huntingdon is indeed a mother in Israel; she is all in a flame for Jesus." To Howell Harris he writes, "I am now waiting for Lord Bolingbroke and others, who are coming to hear the glorious gospel. Lord Lothian is in town. Our good Lady is going on, and every day increasing her reward in heaven." To Mr. Hervey, he says, "You will not be offended if I tell you, that good Lady Huntingdon saw your letter; she was much pleased with it, and has a great regard for you. She goes on from strength to strength; the prospect of doing good to the rich that attended her house is very encouraging. I preach twice a week, and yesterday Lord Bolingbroke was one of my auditors; he was pleased to express very great satisfaction. Who knows what God may do? He can never work by a meaner instrument."

These laborious efforts in town greatly impaired his health: and feeling assured that travelling and preaching in the country would be beneficial to him he left London in February 1749, and made an excursion to Exeter and Plymouth. He was greatly benefitted by the change, and often wrote to her, and to some of those noble hearers who had been impressed with the truth. During his absence, Lady Huntingdon invited John Wesley to preach at her house; which he did twice a week, with the occasional assistance of his brother, Mr. Bateman, and a few others, until Whitefield returned to the metropolis. Her catholicity of mind encouraged ministers of Christ, of all names, to seek her society; and no one rejoiced more than her chaplain, when she welcomed Dr. Gifford, minister of the Baptist Chapel in Eagle-Street, and Dr. Gibbons to her house. Whitefield, however, was the decided favourite with the assemblies at her residence; and the time was anticipated with much pleasure, when he would return.

In March 1749, the eldest daughter of Lady Huntingdon was appointed lady of the bedchamber to the Princesses Amelia and Caroline, sisters to George III., in the room of Lady Anne Montague, who resigned. She was then in her eighteenth year, and was much admired at court for her elegant manners, her vivacity, and great abilities. Horace Walpole, afterwards Lord Orford, says, "The *Queen of the Methodists* got her daughter named for lady of the bedchamber to the Princesses; but it is all off again, as she will not let her play at cards on Sundays." Whether this be the real cause or not, it is certain that she retained the appointment only a few months, and was succeeded by a daughter of Earl Gower.

The Countess intended to have met Whitefield at Bristol, where his brother requested to have the honour of receiving her at his residence; but a very serious indisposition prevented her. She had at this time a house in North Audley-Street, where Whitefield, when in town, preached on Thursday evenings to crowded audiences, chiefly of the nobility. In the month of May this devoted minister visited Portsmouth, where his ministry was made so very useful, that a small tabernacle was afterwards erected, which, under the fostering care of many devoted ministers, has grown into the spacious and handsome edifice now existing in that important town. Continued indisposition detained Lady Huntingdon in London till the beginning of June, when she repaired to Bristol, and took up her residence, for a time, at the house of Whitefield's brother. Her chaplain was itinerating through Wales, and returned to Bristol, June 23rd. In a letter to Mr. Hervey, he says,

"Yesterday God brought me here, after having carried me a circuit of about eight hundred miles, and enabled me to preach I suppose, to upwards of a hundred thousand souls. I have been in eight Welsh counties, and I think we have not had one dry meeting. The work in Wales is much upon the advance, and likely to increase daily. Had my dear Mr. Hervey been there to have seen the simplicity of so many dear souls, I am persuaded he would have said, *Sit anima mea cum Methodistis!* But every one to his part. * * * Good Lady Huntingdon is here, and goes on in her usual way, doing good. She is recovered from her indisposition."

With recruited health, the Countess recommenced her active endeavours to extend the Redeemer's kingdom. She devised many plans for benefiting the poor around her; and in conjunction with the Ladies' Hastings, who now joined her at Clifton, she visited the prisoners who were cast into goal for debt. She enlisted the sympathies of some ladies of rank, and had the satisfaction of liberating many miserable individuals, whose debts were under ten pounds. Some she restored to their disconsolate families, and others she enabled, through her liberality, to pursue their usual employments. She was also unremitting in her exertions to bring the sound of mercy into the wretched hovels which crowded the water-side. The preaching of Whitefield had attracted such crowds, and awakened so many to care for the soul, that a large commodious place of worship was much needed in Bristol. Lady Huntingdon was ever ready to assist him in his efforts; she entered warmly into the proposal to erect a Tabernacle in the city; and used her influence with her acquaintance in high rank to obtain contributions towards the object. She wrote to Lords Chesterfield, Bolingbroke, and Bath; and they replied to her solicitations with liberal donations, and expressed their delight at the success which was following the labours of her honoured chaplain.

As the young Earl of Huntingdon was approaching his majority, the Countess made great preparations to resign to him Donnington Park. She left Clifton early in the month of August, and proceeded to Ashby-de-la-Zouch, where she took a large house, and resided with her other children and the Ladies' Hastings. In a letter to the Rev. R. Darracott, she says,

"The affairs of my family called me from home, but I am again brought back in safety, and much happiness of heart, and that to a sweet little family, who live but to devote every hour more and more to the love and knowledge of the Lord Jesus. We had agreed upon this retreat, and taken a larger house among us for this purpose, and we wish all your prayers. To become the Lord's in body, soul, and spirit is the one cry and desire of our hearts; and we know he will not reject us, nor cast us out; and though we can do nothing, yet we can receive of his fulness grace for grace; and in this world suffer reproach and persecution for his name's sake, which is sweet and honourable to us; when, though we can do nothing, we glory in this, that, to his praise, he hath redeemed, and will make us priests unto God. We should rejoice to see you amongst us; and I hope nothing will prevent it, if convenient to you. All gospel ministers it is our highest honour and happiness to serve, and no denomination do we ever reject."

When the young Earl became of age, he took possession of the ancestral mansions, Donnington Park, Ledstone Hall, &c.; and soon after set out on his travels through France, Italy, and Germany. Lord Chesterfield took a deep interest in his welfare, and introduced him to the most distinguished continental society. In a letter to a lady, in whose society he wished to place him, he says, "He is the Earl of Huntingdon, one of the first peers of England, whose family is celebrated in the most ancient records. His merits and talents are at least equal to his descent; he is distinguished from all our young nobility by his personal erudition; in short, he wants nothing to make him perfect, but what he will acquire with you better than anywhere else;—I mean an acquaintance with the polite world. I will venture to add one merit more, which I flatter myself he will have in your opinion, which is that of being my particular friend. He looks upon me as his father, and I consider him my adopted son." His mother, however, well knew that what he most wanted was the grace of God to change his heart. How fervently did she wrestle with Heaven on his behalf! how solemnly, yet how affectionately, did she instruct warn, and beseech him to make the Lord his choice! Her greatest grief was occasioned by the sceptical tenets which the young man imbibed from his gay and fashionable companions. He, however, always treated her with that reverence and love which such a kind and devoted mother deserved.

It was about this period that her Ladyship's attention was first directed to Ireland. That unhappy country was in a most deplorable condition. Popery was every where rampant, and the people were crushed down by the heavy rule of an intolerant priesthood. The Protestants were few in number, and, for the most part, destitute of a living piety; though here and there a devoted minister appeared, like an oasis in a desert, to relieve the dreary aspect. On Whitefield's return from his first voyage to America, the vessel was so shattered with storms, that they made for the port of Limerick, where he landed, and preached in the cathedral. The Bishop, Dr. Burscough, received him with the utmost cordiality and kindness; and in Dublin, the Bishop of Derry, and the Lord Primate of Ireland invited him to their houses, and engaged him to preach. The successful labours of Mr. Williams, an itinerant Methodist, induced John Wesley, to visit Dublin in 1748; where he formed a small society, and preached to great crowds. His brother Charles, accompanied by several preachers, succeeded him, and laboured for a considerable time in Ireland. At Cork, a most violent persecution was raised against them; the magistrates refused to grant them protection; and the grand jury returned this singular verdict;—"We find and present Charles Wesley to be a person of ill-fame, a vagabond, and a common disturber of his Majesty's peace; and we pray that he may be transported!"

Lady Huntingdon was deeply concerned for the spread of the gospel in Ireland. The country had a claim upon her sympathies. Her grandfather was a Baronet of that kingdom, and her mother was an Irish Lady; many of her relatives were natives and residents there; and her daughter was betrothed to an Irish lord. A statement of these persecutions was, therefore, forwarded to her; and she immediately requested Whitefield to wait on the Speaker of the House of Commons, in her name, and demand redress. Dr. Gifford, the friend of Sir Arthur Onslow, introduced him, and opened the business. The Speaker expressed his great regard for her Ladyship, and indignation at the sufferings of the Methodists; but said that Lord Harrington, the Lieutenant of Ireland, or the Secretary of State, were the most proper persons to apply to, and he did not doubt but that, through her application, the grievances would be redressed. A well attested narrative of the whole affair was forwarded to Lord Harrington; a memorial was presented to the King by Lady Chesterfield, at the request of the Countess; and the Duke of Newcastle, then Secretary of State, was spoken to. These attempts were successful; and many blessed God that it was in the power of her Ladyship to help the poor sufferers of Cork.

As soon as Lady Huntingdon had taken up her residence at Ashby, she commenced her labours for the benefit of the poor around her. She devised many plans to promote their temporal comfort, and was very zealous to impart to them the glad tidings of salvation. Assisted by her domestic chaplain, Mr. Baddelley, of whose piety and faithfulness she had a high opinion, and the Ladies' Hastings, she instructed the children, and visited the cottages of the poor; and spoke affectionately to them of the important truths of the gospel. The kindness of manner, and the simplicity of her faith, enabled her to present the truth in a way calculated to reach the understanding and heart of the illiterate; and though often discouraged by the indifference of her hearers, she persevered, and at length witnessed the fruit of her labours.

She set plainly before them the depravity of their hearts, and guilt they had contracted by their sins, the divine punishment which threatened them, the mercy God has displayed in the gift of his Son, and the all-sufficiency of the atoning sacrifice of Christ to procure pardon and peace for the sinner. With her characteristic love for perishing souls, she urged them by every consideration to flee from the wrath to come, and to embrace Jesus as their Saviour by believing in him. Many were deeply impressed with the truth; the tears might often have been seen flowing down the hardened cheeks; and several came to her, of their own accord, under great distress of mind, to speak to her Ladyship respecting their souls. A visible reformation appeared in the lives of not a few; the Sabbath was observed with much greater strictness; and many vicious practices were either given up, or withdrawn from the public gaze.

While Lady Huntingdon was absent from London, the nobility crowded to the drawing-rooms of her friends to listen to the preaching of the gospel. The Countess Delitz, sister of Lady Chesterfield, opened her mansion in South Audley Street; and the residence of Lady Gertrude Hotham became a temple for the service of the Lord. Whitefield laboured there with great diligence and success; and in his letters to the Countess at Ashby, he records the evident tokens of God's favour. He says, "Though I am weary in walking to and from South Audley Street, yet I must not omit sending to your Ladyship this night. This day hath been spent with the Countess, Lady Gertrude, Colonel Gumley, &c. I gave them the communion, and afterwards preached; the public minister from Genoa came to hear me, and I believe it was a profitable season. Lady Fanny holds on, and writes word to the Countess that she wishes all were as happy as she hath been in reading Bishop Hall's Contemplations." Lady Fanny Shirley also now made an open profession of her faith in Christ, and remained stedfast amid the sneers and ridicule of her fashionable friends. She opened her house for the preaching of the gospel; and there Whitefield and other ministers proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation. He says, "On Saturday I had the honour of being almost all the day long with Lady Fanny, Lady Gertrude Hotham, Lady Chesterfield, and the Countess Delitz. Lady Fanny and the Countess received the blessed sacrament before the others came, and I think they both grow." While Whitefield was preaching in Yorkshire, where, in connexion with Mr. Grimshaw, he produced the most marvellous excitement, he often wrote to the noble converts in London, and urged them to maintain their faith and zeal, and to persevere in their efforts to make known the gospel. He did not visit Scotland this year, but after preaching for Wesley's societies at Leeds and Newcastle, returned to London.

Whitefield had a very high opinion of the wisdom and the talents of Lady Huntingdon. He generally deferred to her judgment in religious matters, and was thankful for her advice in all his movements. His diffidence led him to shrink from exercising authority and power. He says, "O that I may learn from all I see to desire to be nothing, and to think it my highest privilege to be an assistant to all, but the head of none. He, however, was by no means insensible to the advantages of systematic unity; and he formed the design of identifying Lady Huntingdon with his societies, by appointing her the head of them. He wished to be free from the care of them, that he might be more at liberty to preach the gospel; he had seen the many benefits accruing to the persecuted from her patronage; and he discerned in her those qualities which admirably fitted her to command. In a letter to her Ladyship he says "A *leader* is wanting. This honour hath been put upon your Ladyship by the great Head of the Church; an honour conferred on few, but an earnest of one to be put upon your Ladyship before men and angels, when time shall be no more." It is not known how she replied to his suggestion; but no one can peruse her life, and see how wisely she managed the affairs of a vast number of chapels, and regulated an itinerancy spread over the greater part of England and Wales, without admitting, that Whitefield was correct in his estimate of her powers of supervision and controul.

It was a matter of deep concern to the Countess, that there existed so little cordiality between the two great leaders of Methodism. Each was labouring in his different sphere, and was anxious to promote the salvation of souls; but they never assisted one another, nor interchanged their services. Her Ladyship possessed the true spirit of the Evangelical Alliance, a century before such a thing was realized: and with a view to heal the breach between these good men, and to promote Christian union, she wrote to Whitefield and Wesley, and urged them to forget their differences, and remember their point of agreement,—to abandon controversy,—and to show an example of forbearance and love. Her advice secured the most happy results. Whitefield offered his services to Wesley, which were accepted. On Friday, January 19th, 1750, Wesley read prayers at West-Street Chapel, and Whitefield preached to a very crowded congregation; and on the following Sabbath, Whitefield read prayers and Wesley preached at the Tabernacle, after which the sacrament was administered to above twelve hundred persons. The next morning, Wesley read prayers at the Foundry, and Howell Harris preached to the people. These fraternal services greatly delighted Whitefield; and filled Lady Huntingdon with devout thankfulness. She fervently prayed that the union might be lasting, and exert a beneficial influence on the Church and the world. From this time, these champions of the truth were drawn closer together; they cherished more kindly feelings, and occasionally assisted each other. It is true the deep scar of the wound still remained, and sometimes called up a feeling of rivalry; but they strove to gain the mastery over it; they kept up a correspondence, which was broken off only by death; and when Whitefield fell in the service of his Master on a foreign land, the surviving veteran preached his funeral sermon, and pronounced a just and eloquent eulogy on his character.

Towards the end of January 1750, Lady Huntingdon was attacked with an alarming illness, which for several days threatened the loss of her valuable life. The Ladies Hastings were anxiously concerned for her safety; they procured the best medical aid in the vicinity of Ashby, and immediately dispatched a messenger to Northampton for Dr. Stonhouse. Many were the fervent prayers they offered to Him, in whom we live, and move, and have our being, that her life might be spared; and these petitions were heard and answered. In about ten days, under the judicious treatment of the doctor, the violence of the disease began to abate; and her Ladyship soon became so far recovered, as to be able to write to her friends, though for some weeks she was unable to leave her apartment. Lady Anne Hastings wrote to Whitefield, and informed him of the illness of the Countess; but as he was travelling in Gloucestershire, he did not receive the letter, till he heard at Bristol of her recovery; when he forwarded to her one of those cheering and consolatory letters, which he knew so well how to indite. The anxiety and constant attendance of Lady Anne, brought on a serious indisposition; but repose and care speedily restored her to health and strength.

The mind of Lady Huntingdon was greatly chastened by the affliction through which she had passed, and she resolved more earnestly to employ the life God had been pleased to spare. She had passed through so many seasons of trial, that she was eminently calculated to soothe the mourning spirit; and her experience had been so varied, that there were few cases in which she could not sympathize, as having passed through the same. It was about this time that the news of the death of the Duke of Somerset reached her; and she wrote a letter of condolence to the sorrowing widow, whom she had known, and often visited, when the celebrated Countess of Hertford. After his decease, his widow returned to Percy Lodge, near Colnbrook; a most magnificent spot, which has been celebrated by Shenstone, Thomson, and other poets. She was a distinguished patroness of literature, saved the life of Savage by her intercession with the King, and was deservedly admired for her fine taste, splendid talents, and exalted virtues. Her friendship increased for Lady Huntingdon; whose piety and holy conversation were the means of leading her to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, before she was removed from this world—an event which took place a few years after the Duke.

Whitefield was now zealously itinerating in Cornwall. He had written a letter to the Bishop of Exeter, and he was anxious to see how it had been received. He went to Exeter in March, and again appeared in the fields; for which Lavington threatened to write another phamphlet against him. In the evening, the Bishop, and several of his clergy stood near him, and saw ten-thousand persons awe-struck by his appeals. Three large stones were hurled at the preacher by a furious drunkard, one of which cut him severely on the head; yet, neither the prelate nor his friends interfered, though the lives of their own parishioners were endangered. Whitefield met with a warm coadjutor in the Rev. Mr. Thompson, vicar of St. Ginny near Camelford, an intimate friend of Lady Huntingdon. He was a man of great talents, and social disposition; but had been very gay and dissipated. In the midst of his debaucheries, he had a remarkable dream;

when a voice said to him, "This day month, about six in the afternoon, you must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, to give an account of the dreadful abuse of all your talents, and the injuries done to the souls committed to your care." The dream was twice repeated, and filled him with the greatest alarm. He confessed his sins, cried out for mercy, and became a burning and shining light. His heart was filled with intense love for perishing souls; and he commenced faithfully to preach the gospel, and to warn all to flee to Christ for safety. The Spirit of God greatly blessed his labours; a mighty awakening took place in his parish; and throughout the county, his zeal and piety were conspicuous. His devotedness to his Master stirred up the opposition of the clergy; the neighbouring pulpits were all closed against him; and he was summoned before his diocesan, to answer certain grave charges which were made against him. The Bishop threatened to strip him of his gown, for his Methodistical practices, and for daring to countenance Whitefield. His Lordship, however, was saved the trouble; for Mr. Thompson immediately disrobed himself; and throwing his gown at Lavington's feet, exclaimed, "I can preach the gospel without a gown," and retired. Astonished at such independent conduct, the Bishop stood for some time confounded; but at length, he sent for the intrepid man, and persuaded him to remain in the church. This laborious minister was the means of bringing many to the knowledge of the truth. Dr. Doddridge calls him a second Colonel Gardiner, "whose story may be told whenever the Established Church shall lose one of its brightest living ornaments, and one of the most useful members, of which that, or perhaps any Christian communion, can boast."

Towards the end of March 1750, London was thown into the greatest consternation by the shocks of an earthquake. The city was notorious for its ignorance and vice. Infidelity had spread widely among the higher classes, and breathed its blasphemy in the most public manner. Error had crept into the churches, and, in various forms, was lulling men to destruction. Idleness, drunkenness, luxury, extravagance, and debauchery were seen in all directions. The shocks were very violent and rapid. The earth trembled and rocked with great velocity; and a low rumbling sound, like the murmur of distant thunder, was heard. The houses vibrated on their foundations; the windows rattled in their frames; the tiles flew off from the roofs; and many chimneys were thrown down. Fear seized the hearts of the people; and multitudes rushed out of the city to seek safety elsewhere. The roads were crowded with fugitives; and vast numbers repaired to the fields and open places near the metropolis. Tower-hill, Moorfields, and especially Hyde Park were filled with men, women, and children; who remained there a whole night in the most fearful apprehension. The places of worship were thronged with frightened sinners; and the Methodist chapels were literally besieged by the crowds, who knocked at the doors, and cried out for God's sake to be admitted.

As usual on such occasions, many prophets arose to point out the coming disasters. A soldier spread the tidings that it had been revealed to him that a part of London and Westminster would be destroyed by an earthquake, on a certain night between twelve and one o'clock. When the night approached, thousands fled from the city to the fields, where they awaited the awful event, in solemn and breathless silence; while many ran through the streets in a state of frenzy, cying out that the day of judgment was come, and their damnation was at hand. The chapels of the Methodists were filled with excited audiences; and Charles Wesley and Whitefield preached incessantly, and succeeded in calming their minds, and directing them to Christ. Whitefield repaired to Hyde Park at midnight, to speak to the people there assembled. No pen can adequately describe the scene. The vast space was one sea of living beings, whose movements could hardly be discovered through the darkness of the night. A confused murmur ran through the whole mass; which was often disturbed by wild cries and shrieks, when fancy pictured the horror of the approaching earthquake. Whitefield rose, and began to speak amid the most breathless silence. His soul was in sympathy with the solemn occasion; his majestic voice sounded clear and impressive in the midnight air:—and with all the pathos and grandeur of his nature, he led the minds of his audience to the consideration of that great day, when every soul will stand before God, and receive the reward of his deeds; and when the framework of nature will be dissolved, and this very earth and its works be wrapped in flames. His appeals to their hearts and consciences were overwhelming. His words stirred up the depths of the soul; and as his impassioned eloquence streamed forth, he irresistibly carried his audience along with him, bringing terror to the sinner, hope to the desponding, faith to the awakened, and peace and joy to the believing heart. He wrote to Lady Huntingdon, and said, "God has been terribly shaking the metropolis. I hope it is an earnest of his giving a shock to secure sinners, and making them cry out 'What shall we do to be saved?'"

CHAPTER VII. A.D. 1750—1751.

THE REV. JAMES HERVEY.—WHITEFIELD AT NORTHAMPTON AND ASHBY.—NEW JERSEY COLLEGE.—PERSECUTION AT ASHBY.—CONVERSION OF MR. THORPE.—WHITEFIELD IN YORKSHIRE.—MINISTERS' BREAKFAST AT THE TABERNACLE.—MESSRS. MADAN AND BROWNE ORDAINED THROUGH LADY HUNTINGDON'S INFLUENCE.—ILLNESS OF THE COUNTESS.—DEATH OF LADY FRANCES HASTINGS.

LADY Huntingdon remained for some time at Ashby in a very precarious state of health. Her active and enterprising mind, and her ardent feelings were almost too powerful for her weak frame, and frequently brought her to the verge of the grave. Through a long life, she was often severely afflicted; yet she bore it with patient resignation; and increased her exertions for the glory of God while it was yet day, because she could not tell how soon the night might close in upon her. Every year her circle of friends and correspondents was widening; whom she greatly stimulated by her pious conversation, and her devout and beautiful letters. When her illness prevented her exhorting the strong, visiting the sick, or reading to the dying, her time was occupied in writing to her friends; and in her voluminous correspondence* it would be difficult to determine which to admire most;—the simplicity of style, the vigour of thought, and the judicious wisdom which characterized her letters; or, the earnestness of zeal, the spirituality of mind, the humility and self-abnegation, and the unreserved consecration of heart which pervade them. It was about this time she corresponded regularly with the excellent Mr. Hervey, and continued to do so till his death; and his letters to her are full of that pathos and spirituality for which his writings are remarkable.

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* See The Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon, 2 vols. London, Painter.

During her Ladyship's indisposition, Whitefield left London, in the beginning of May, to visit her at Ashby: and on his way, spent a few days at Northampton with Dr. Stonhouse, Dr. Doddridge, Mr. Hervey, and Mr. Hartley, rector of Winwick. He had been associated with Mr. Hervey at the university, and when on a previous visit to him, preached in Northampton for Dr. Doddridge, who, in return, took the service of the Tabernacle in London. Dr. Stonhouse had imbibed infidel principles when studying anatomy under Dr. Nicholls at Oxford, and laboured to diffuse them abroad; but the work of Doddridge on the "*Rise and Progress of Religion*," and the efforts of Mr. Hervey were the means of his conversion to God. Whitefield says:—

"On the Tuesday I preached in the morning to Dr. Doddridge's family, and in the afternoon to above two thousand in the field. Dr. Stonhouse, Mr. Hervey, &c., attended me, and walked with me afterwards along the street; so that I hope the physician will now turn his back on the world, and be content to follow a despised crucified Redeemer without reserve. I expounded at his house in the evening, and am hereafter to come to it as my own."

Lady Huntingdon took a warm interest in the spiritual welfare of the physician. While he was attending to the health of her body, she was ministering to the prosperity of his soul; and her conversation and letters were of the most signal service to him, and encouraged him to make an open profession of the gospel. Dr. Stonhouse soon after began to preach, and Lady Huntingdon and her chaplain wrote to him and urged him to go forth boldly, and proclaim the glad tidings of salvation every where. As the Rev. Sir James Stonhouse, he afterwards became well known, and was considered one of the most correct and elegant preachers in the kingdom.

On Whitefield's arrival at Ashby, he found the Countess very weak, but much better than he had anticipated. He commenced his energetic labours, and aroused many to a sense of their miserable condition. He preached daily at her house, and whenever he could, in the neighbouring churches. He, however, experienced great opposition at Ashby; a mob was collected around her Ladyship's door, while he was preaching; and some of those who attended, very narrowly escaped being murdered on their way home. Still thousands flocked to hear the gospel; and a neighbouring magistrate took active steps to bring the rioters to justice. He remained here about a fortnight, during which time many plans were devised for promoting the general interests of religion. He brought letters to her Ladyship from Governor Belcher and President Burr respecting the re-establishment of the Presbyterian College in New Jersey on a more extensive scale. A statement of the proposed enlargement and constitution of the College was drawn up, which, by her Ladyship's advice was printed, together with a recommendation of the plan, subscribed by Lady Huntingdon, George Whitefield, Dr. Doddridge, and others. The Countess entered warmly into the scheme; she collected considerable sums among her friends and acquaintances; and corresponded with many persons of eminence in England and Scotland. Her chaplain also preached several sermons on its behalf, and obtained a large sum of money, which he immediately transmitted to America.

Ashby now enjoyed the labours of four distinguished ministers of Christ. Mr. Baddelley, her domestic chaplain, was in London, and his place was supplied by Mr. Graves and Mr. Simpson, who were zealously engaged in preaching the gospel. Lady Huntingdon wrote to Mr. Hervey, requesting him to pay her a visit as soon as he could; and he arrived at her mansion a few days before Whitefield left. She wished also to have the company of Dr. Doddridge, to whom Whitefield wrote, "Your kind letter found me happy at our good Lady Huntingdon's, whose path shines brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. Gladly shall I call upon you again at Northampton, if the Lord spares my life. * * * Good Lady Huntingdon greatly esteems you. I go with regret from her Ladyship, who intends writing to you this evening; do come and see her soon." Dr. Doddridge was then unable to leave, but paid a visit to Ashby in June.

Whitefield left Ashby May 20th, 1750, and proceeded on his way towards Scotland, preaching the gospel at the principal towns in his route. He often wrote to her Ladyship and narrated the incidents of his career: and in these letters we find the following expression respecting her efforts at Ashby. "I shall be glad to hear what becomes of the rioters. O that your Ladyship may live to see many of those Ashby stones become children to Abraham." "Ungateful Ashby! O that thou knewest the day of thy visitation! Surely your Ladyship may shake off the dust of your feet against them. This was the command which the meek and lowly Jesus gave to his Apostles, where the gospel was not received; and he himself departed when the Gadarenes desired him to go from their coasts. This justifies your Ladyship in removing Mr. Baddelley. What avails throwing pearls before swine, who only turn again and rend you?" Lady Huntingdon, however, did not prosecute those who had disturbed her friends; and Whitefield says, "Your Ladyship hath acted like yourself in forgiving the offenders; such offences come that Christ's followers may give evidence of his blessed temper being wrought in their hearts. Your letter revived my heart, and gave me some fresh hopes for ungrateful Ashby."

On his way to Nottingham, Whitefield met with an intimate friend of her Ladyship, Mrs. Hester Gibbon, aunt to the eloquent historian of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman empire.* She had retired with a Mrs. Hutcheson to a delightful retreat at King's Cliff, Northamptonshire, where, having determined to devote their remaining days to charitable and religious duties, they selected the celebrated Mr. Law, as a suitable person to be their chaplain and almoner. Lady Huntingdon had occasionally corresponded with these singular and benevolent ladies; who when informed by Dr. Stonhouse of the severe illness of the Countess, requested Mr. Hartley to visit Ashby, and convey their condolence to her Ladyship. He, however, was unable to leave his parish; but when Whitefield informed them of her restoration to health, they wrote a cheerful letter to her, and sent it by the hands of Mr, Hartley. "O, how have we prayed and wrestled with the great Author of life and light, for the preservation of your invaluable existence. Precious above estimation is the prolongation of such a life as yours. We mourned, we wept, we prayed; and, each returning day, your case was presented on our family altar. Thanks, eternal thanks to Him, with whom are the issues of life and death, for your restoration and subsequent amendment."

At Rotherham, Whitefield received much opposition, but gained still more success. He preached on the Friday evening and Saturday morning; and writes to Lady Huntingdon, "The crier was employed to give notice of a bear-baiting; your Ladyship may guess who was the *bear.* About seven in the morning the drum was heard, and several watermen attended it with great staves. The constable was struck, and two of the mobbers were apprehended, but rescued afterwards. But all this does not come up to the kind usage of the people of Ashby."

There was a young man named Thorpe who was exceedingly bitter against him, and was not content with personal insult, but added private ridicule to public interruption. The taverns were then the resort of young men, who exercised their talents in mimicry and jesting. At one of these convival parties, Thorpe and three of his companions undertook to entertain their associates by 'taking off' Whitefield. The proposal was received with loud applause, and a prize promised to the best performer. The three, in their turn, mounted the table, opened the Bible, and soon exhausted their stock of ribaldry. Thorpe then arose, and exclaimed, "I shall beat you all." The book was opened, and the text selected, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish;" but he had no sooner uttered the words, than his mind was affected in a very extraordinary manner. The sharpest pangs of conviction seized him, and his conscience denounced tremendous vengeance on his soul. The light of heaven flashed on his mind; his discourse rose orderly before him; and almost unconsciously he proceeded with great fluency of thought and expression, speaking more like a practised divine, than a profligate jester. He afterwards often declared that if ever he preached by the assistance of the Spirit it was then. The impression made upon his mind by the subject, had such an effect upon his manner, that his audience was astounded. They felt he was sincere; instead of being enlivened they were depressed, and were speedily filled with the most gloomy apprehensions. The change in them increased the power of his own convictions; no one dared to stop him; all were riveted to their seats; and his sentences were frequently so thrilling that even his own hair stood erect. At length he finished, and desended from the table; not a word was uttered about the prize; and Thorpe, without noticing any one, hastily retired to his home. This was his last Bacchanalian revel. He broke away from his companions; and afterwards became the pastor of the Independent Church at Masborough, near Rotherham, and the father of the eloquent minister of Castle-Green Chapel, Bristol.

While Lady Huntingdon was entertaining her friends at Ashby, and corresponding with others at a distance, Whitefield was pursuing his labours in Yorkshire. Accompanied by Mr. Grimshaw, and Mr. Ingham, he preached at Leeds, Haworth, and Manchester to astonishing crowds of people. His talents were peculiarly adapted to itinerancy; his manner, voice, solemnity and fervour commanded, and riveted the attention of his audience, and held the crowds spell-bound around him. He travelled through Lancashire, Westmoreland, and Cumberland, preaching every where to the people, who generally were attentive and orderly; and then proceeded to Edinburgh, where he took up his residence at the house of Mr. J. Nimmo, whose Lady was an intimate friend and correspondent of Lady Huntingdon. Whitefield wrote to Ashby an account of his proceedings, which greatly cheered the Countess; and she replied to his letters, and requested him to invite the correspondence of some of the Scottish ministers. She cultivated an acquaintance with Dr. Gillies of Glasgow, Dr. Webster of Edinburgh, and Mr. Wardrobe of Bathgate, whom she often called her zealous Scotch chaplain. After visiting Glasgow, Whitefield returned to his duties in London, and frequently assisted John Wesley, at West Street chapel.

Though the health of Mr. Harvey had been greatly benefited by his visit to Ashby, Dr. Stonhouse advised a fresh change of air; and as Whitefield had invited him to the Tabernacle house in London, he resolved to accept the invitation. On his way thither, he paid a visit to Dr. Cotton, an eminent physician, who kept a private lunatic asylum at St. Albans. This gentleman was a poet, and had been introduced to Lady Huntingdon by Dr. Stonhouse. When he published his "*Visions*," he presented her Ladyship with a copy, who, in a letter acknowledging its receipt, made some remarks on what she considered the defects of the work. He took her friendly criticism in good part, and was confirmed in the soundness of her remarks by the similar animadversions, which his sincere friend Mr. Hervey made on the poem. While Mr. Hervey was in town, Lady Huntingdon persuaded him to avail himself of the visits of Dr. Cotton to the metropolis to secure the benefit of his distinguished skill. She also introduced him to many of the pious nobility, particularly to Lady Hotham, Lady Chesterfield, the Countess Delitz, and Lady Fanny Shirley, at whose house he occasionally expounded to an attentive and fashionable audience. As often as his health permitted, he attended the services of the Tabernacle, and was greatly delighted with the fervour of Whitefield's preaching. The Tabernacle house was the resort of evangelical ministers of all denominations. On one occasion John Wesley, the celebrated Romaine, Dr. Gill, Dr. Gifford, Messrs: Cudworth and Cennick, breakfasted with Whitefield and Hervey; and afterwards spent the morning in reading the Scriptures, prayer, and exhortation. These meetings were seasons of holy joy to them; the Spirit descended with great power upon their souls; their faith was strengthened, their love quickened, their zeal stimulated, and their lives afresh devoted to the service of their Master.

Meanwhile, Lady Huntingdon was actively engaged at Ashby and was reaping a most glorious harvest. She frequently wrote to Whitefield an account of her labours; and he promised to take Ashby on his travels, and visit her Ladyship. He says, "I am surprised at your Ladyship's doing, and going through so much; but what cannot a believer do, when strengthened by the blessed Jesus?" Early in October her honoured chaplain arrived at her mansion, and was highly delighted with the prospect which was opening in the neighbourhood of Ashby. He thus writes to the Countess Delitz from Ashby, October 11th, 1750.

"Good Lady Huntingdon goes on acting the part of a mother in Israel more and more. For a day or two she has had five clergymen under her roof, which makes her Ladyship look like a *good Archbishop* with his chaplains around him. Her house is a Bethel; to us in the ministry it looks like a college. We have the sacrament every morning, heavenly conversation all day, and preach at night. This is to live *at Court* indeed! Last night I had the pleasure of seeing a little flock that seemed to be awakened by the grace of God; so that out of ungrateful Ashby, I trust there will be raised up many children unto Abraham. Your Ladyship, and the other elect ladies are never forgotten by us. I would write to good Lady Fanny, but I hear she is out of town."

Whitefield's labours were much more successful than when he was last at Ashby; his preaching produced a deep impression on the hearts of many, and filled her Ladyship's circle with love, joy, and peace. His discourses were full of fervour and spirituality; he preached Christ as the only remedy for sin, the only refuge for safety, and the only hope which can support in death, and brighten the future. The neighbouring churches, and the open fields witnessed his enthusiastic exertions; and the drawing-rooms of the Countess bore testimony to his faithfulness and zeal. All were highly delighted with his visit, and were stimulated to seek after higher attainments in the divine life, and to consecrate themselves more entirely to the service of Jesus Christ. The heart of this distinguished minister was absorbed in his great work. His eye was constantly overlooking the vast sphere of his labours; and while he was zealously itinerating in the vicinity of Ashby, he did not forget the other parts of his vineyard, but addressed letters to his converts elsewhere; and especially to Lady Hotham, to console her under the bereaving stroke which removed her beloved daughter from her.

Lady Huntingdon was ever on the alert to introduce holy and devoted men to the ministry, by procuring for them episcopal ordination. She was truly anxious for the efficiency of the Church of England, and longed to see evangelical religion flourish in her pulpits; and nothing but her love for perishing souls, which was stronger than her love for any earthly community, induced her, at a later period of her career, reluctantly to break through the ties which connected her with the Establishment. She was about this time instrumental in procuring ordination for two young men, who afterwards became celebrated preachers in her chapels, and in the episcopal church.

Mr. Martin Madan was the eldest son of Colonel Madan, and was brought up to the study of the law. He possessed great powers of imitation, and caused much amusement to his gay companions at the noted coffee houses in the metropolis. One evening he was requested to hear Wesley preach, and then return, and exhibit his style of discourse for their entertainment. He entered the chapel just as the holy man named his text, "*Prepare to meet thy God!*" and was deeply impressed with his solemn appeals. He returned to his companions, who asked him if he had taken off the old Methodist. "No, gentlemen," he replied, "but he has taken *me* off." He withdrew from their company, and henceforth associated with religious persons. He was early introduced to Lady Huntingdon, whose pious conversation greatly stimulated his faith. He possessed an ample fortune, commanding talents, and a prospect of great eminence in his profession; but the love of Christ so warmed his heart, that he wished to consecrate himself to the work of the ministry.

His connection with the Methodists, however, was a great barrier to his success; but through the perseverance and influence of Lady Huntingdon, he was admitted into holy orders. Soon after his ordination, he preached his first sermon in All-hallows Church, Lombard Street. The curiosity of the people was aroused; the novelty of a lawyer turning divine, drew a large audience; and his eloquence and Christian doctrines filled his hearers with gladness. He was rather tall in stature, and robust in constitution; his countenance was majestic, open, and engaging; and his whole appearance noble and commanding. He preached extempore; his voice was clear, musical, and powerful; his action peculiarly graceful; his language forcible and expressive; his doctrines thoroughly evangelical; his arguments perspicuous and conclusive. He was mighty in the Scriptures; and was the founder and first chaplain of the Lock Hospital, near Hyde Park corner. Whitefield writes to her Ladyship, "I am glad Mr. Madan is ordained, and I hope Mr. Browne will be the next. By the Bishop's letter to him, I find your Ladyship has acted in the affair like yourself. Mr. Browne is much for embarking in Christ's cause, and if the Duchess (of Somerset) would but help him at this juncture, he might be a useful and happy man."

Mr. Moses Browne, afterwards well known as the vicar of Olney, of Morden College, Blackheath, met with many obstacles in endeavouring to obtain episcopal ordination. Though he had not received an university education, he was a man of considerable talent, and had a great taste for poetry. His large family and slender means called forth his activity; and he became a constant contributor to the "*Gentleman's Magazine*," through which he was made known to Dr. Watts, who introduced him to Lady Huntingdon and Lady Hertford, afterwards Duchess of Somerset, at whose house he met with the most eminent literary characters of the day. A serious illness, and the preaching of the Methodists led to his conversion; and he desired to proclaim to others the salvation he had received. Her Ladyship's success on behalf of Mr. Madan induced her to persevere in her efforts to procure ordination for Mr. Browne. She wrote to the Bishop of Winchester, who politely refused; and then forwarded his testimonials, signed by three beneficed clergymen, Messrs. Baddelley, Hervey, and Hartley, to the Bishop of Worcester. As he was in very straitened circumstances, she collected a sum of money among her friends to relieve his wants. Lady Chesterfield took a deep interest in his welfare; the Countess Delitz sent him ten guineas; Lady Fanny Shirley wrote to the Duchess of Somerset and secured her interest; and Lord Bath assured her Ladyship of his favour and support. Her application to the Bishop of Worcester failed; but at length, Lady Huntingdon secured the interest of the Hon. Welbore Ellis, one of the Lords of the Admiralty, through which Mr. Browne procured ordination, and soon after commenced his ministry as curate to Mr. Hervey at Collingtree. He, however, first repaired to Ashby, and preached effectively to the people there, and assisted her domestic chaplain in his duties at her house; and frequently preached for Mr. Madan at the Lock."

The health of Lady Huntingdon still continued very feeble. After rallying for a short time, toward the close of the year she gradually declined. Her friends were very anxious on her behalf. Dr. Doddridge expressed his fear that they would soon lose her; and Mr. Hervey wrote for tidings of her health, "for never" he remarks "will the physicians' skill be employed for the lengthening of a more valuable life." At the beginning of 1751, her illness became so alarming, that Whitefield was immediately sent for. He rode post to Ashby, not knowing whether he could be in time to see Lady Huntingdon alive. He found the house one of gloom and sadness. Death had entered, and carried off his victim. A fever had prostrated her daughter, Lady Selina; the Countess was brought to the door of death; and a few hours before her chaplain arrived, Lady Frances Hastings had been suddenly snatched away. Her death was a translation to glory; she smiled sweetly on those who were around her, and fell asleep in Jesus without a groan. The Countess bore up under the trial, and thought only of her own speedy dismissal; but her Master had yet much work for her to do. He gradually brought her out of danger, and restored her daughter to health. He sent his Spirit to dry up the mourner's tears, and caused the sad event to produce humility and resignation to Him in all things. Whitefield says, in a letter to Lady Mary Hamilton, dated Ashby, January 30th, 1751:—

"I got safe to Ashby, where I found good Lady Huntingdon very sick, though I trust not unto death. All advise her Ladyship to take a journey to Bristol, for the benefit of the waters, which her Ladyship seems determined to do. The death of Lady Frances has not affected her Ladyship so as to hurt her. She rejoices at the thought of her sister being so quickly translated out of this house of bondage into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Her death was a translation indeed. Her Ladyship died without a groan. She seemed, as it were, to smile at death; and may be said, I trust truly, "to fall asleep in Jesus." Ere long, she and all that sleep in Jesus, shall come with him. I hope it hath been a purging time in this family. Almost all have been sick in their turns. Lady Selina has had a fever, but is better. Lady Betty is more affected than ever I saw her. A letter now from one of the young ladies, I hope would do service. Lady Anne bears up pretty well, but Miss Wheeler* is inconsolable. It is a house of mourning;

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* Niece of Lady Huntingdon.

that is better than a house of feasting. The corpse is to be interred on Friday evening. May all that follow it look and learn ! I mean, learn to live, and learn to die."

Lady Frances Hastings died January 23rd, 1751, in the fity-eighth year of her age. She was to all a pattern of humility, sincerity, and heavenly mindedness. Her piety was deep and genuine, her manners graceful and obliging, and her disposition cheerful and happy. She was a great friend to the poor : who deeply lamented her death, and attended her funeral in large numbers. When her remains were placed beside those of her ancestors in the church of Ashby, Whitefield preached a most pathetic and thrilling sermon from these beautiful words :—"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth ; yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."

CHAPTER VIII. A. D. 1751—1753.

LADY HUNTINGDON AT BRISTOL.—DEATH OF THE PRINCE OF WALES:—HIS RELIGIOUS SENTIMENTS.—THE COUNTESS AT CHELTENHAM; BATH.—WARBURTON.—DEATH OF DR. DODDRIDGE.—DR. OLIVER.—FAITH.—DEATH OF LORD BOLINGBROKE: HIS WRITINGS, FAMILY.—LADY HUNTINGDON IN LONDON.—MARRIAGE OF HER DAUGHTER TO BARON RAWDON.—THE COUNTESS AT BATH.—BEAU NASH.—HERVEY'S "THERON AND ASPASIO."—LADY HUNTINGDON AT CLIFTON.—THE NEW TABERNACLE, MOORFIELDS.—BRISTOL TABERNACLE OPENED.

WHITEFIELD could not stay long with her Ladyship at Ashby. The illness of his wife suddenly called him to London, where he arrived the first week in Febuary 1751. Before his departure he wrote to Dr. Stonhouse, and urged him to use his influence to induce Mr. Hartley to come without delay to Ashby; but as the latter was unable to leave his parish, the Doctor himself came, and remained with her Ladyship until she was sufficiently recovered to remove to the Hot-Wells, Bristol. He also prevailed upon Dr. Doddridge to pay her a visit during his stay there. They were actively engaged in the work of the Lord; every evening they preached alternately; and occasionally administered the sacrament. Dr. Stonhouse was then in a state of doubt and anxiety. The letters of Whitefield and others had urged him to come boldly out and preach the gospel; but he had such a dread of the world's sneers, and of being branded as a Methodist, that he hesitated to take a decided step.

During this visit, her Ladyship and Dr. Doddridge spoke to him so faithfully, that the poor man burst into tears, and appeared to be in great distress. Early in March, her Ladyship was sufficiently restored to proceed with her family to Bristol, where she again took up her residence at the house of Whitefield's brother. She bore the journey much better than was anticipated, notwithstanding the wretched roads through which she passed; and derived much benefit from the change. A few days after her arrival, she was agreeably surprised by a visit from her chaplain, who had been preaching in Gloucestershire with his accustomed energy and success. After spending a few days with her, and witnessing the beneficial effects of the waters in recruiting her health, he resolved to itinerate in Devonshire, and wrote, by her request, to Mr. Hervey to prevail upon him to supply his place in her Ladyship's circle. His precarious state of health prevented his compliance; and Whitefield then wrote to Mr. Hartley, and enclosed a letter from the Countess, requesting him to come to Bristol immediately. "It would much refresh her, and, I believe, be very agreeable to you. Some pulpits would be open to you, and who knows but you might catch some great fish in the gospel net." He came, and preached several times in the neighbouring churches with much acceptance. When Whitefield returned from his excursion, he found that Mr. Daniel Rowlands a celebrated Welsh clergyman, had arrived on a visit to her Ladyship, a few days before. They immediately commenced their united services in the open air, and preached to the vast crowds which attended them; and many notoriously wicked persons were induced to forsake their profligate ways, and turn unto the Lord. The Countess was highly delighted with the sight of the multitudes listening to the gospel, and mingled her joy with that of those pure spirits who rejoice over one sinner that repenteth. She blessed the Lord for the affliction which brought her to Bristol, and remarked, with her chaplain, that she often found Luther's words truly applicable to herself:—"He was never employed about any fresh work, but he was either visited with a fit of illness, or some violent temptations."

Lady Huntingdon at this time received a shock, in common with many in high life, by the unexpected death of the Prince of Wales, who died of pleurisy, March 20, 1751. Ever since his unhappy difference with his father, George II., he had formed his own party, kept his own court, and placed himself in opposition to the Government. His literary tastes and patronage collected around him the most distinguished literati of the day, among whom were Swift, Pope, and Thomson. The rising statesmen crowded to his court; Pitt, Lyttleton, and the Grenvilles were his associates; and Lord Bolingbroke was his chief adviser. Lady Huntingdon had frequently attended his court, and had received the most marked attention from the Prince; and Lord Huntingdon, Lord Ferrars, and many of her relatives and friends were his political supporters. He was a prince of amiable and generous disposition, elegant manners, considerable talents, and liberal principles. He appointed Mr., afterwards Lord, Lyttleton, her Ladyship's intimate friend, his principal secretary, and Dr. Ayscough the preceptor to his children. The latter gentleman was introduced by Lady Huntingdon to Dr. Doddridge, who was prevailed upon by her Ladyship to present his work on "*The Rise and Progress of Religion*," to the Princess of Wales through Dr. Ayscough; for which he received the special thanks of her Royal Highness. These two distinguished men corresponded with each other; and Dr. Ayscough says in one of his letters to him, that the young prince, afterwards George III., has "learned several pages in your little book of verses without any directions from me."

The Countess was deeply anxious to ascertain the religious feelings and sentiments of the Prince of Wales at the close of his life. He had always manifested a regard to the outward propriety and decorum of religion. Amidst the blaze of his splendid court, where the marvellous religious excitement among the great was a frequent topic of conversation, he always insisted on the necessity and value of religion; and more than once rebuked the sarcasms which were indulged in, chiefly at the expense of Lady Huntingdon. Her Ladyship, therefore, wrote to Mr. Lyttleton for what information he could give her; and though the particulars were few, they were so far satisfactory. It appears that the Prince looked upon the rise and growth of Methodism with a very friendly eye, and was very anxious to know what were the distinguishing doctrines they held. He had frequent arguments with Lord Bolingbroke respecting it, who considered that he was fast verging towards embracing it; and he went more than once to hear Whitefield, with whom he was highly pleased, and would, had he lived, have attempted to honour him with his favour. He was also in the habit of reading the works of Doddridge, which had been presented to the Princess, and expressed his approbation of them in the highest terms.

Dr. Doddridge had been for many years employed on his "*Family Expositor*," which he was publishing by subscription. Few persons made greater exertions to circulate the work than Lady Huntingdon. She had a warm attachment to the author, and a high opinion of the work; and most earnestly prayed the Lord to prolong his valuable life, and to give him strength and abilities for the completion of "a work so calculated to promote the glory of His name, and the everlasting good of mankind." Her friend Mr. Lyttleton was very active in securing for it an extensive circulation; but a dangerous illness seized him, and retarded the appearance of the volumes. On his recovery, he renewed his exertions, and forwarded to her Ladyship a long list of fresh subscribers: and by his influence he introduced the work into many families, where otherwise it would never have entered. Mr. Lyttleton shortly afterwards had the misfortune to lose his father, Sir Thomas Lyttleton, an intimate friend of the late Earl of Huntingdon. The Duchess of Bridgewater, who had attended the services at the house of Lady Huntingdon in London, and Dr. Ayscough, son-in-law of the deceased baronet, wrote to the Countess, and presented some particulars of his last moments. The work of Doddridge on Religion was much blessed to him, and he recommended it to his children just before his departure. His son George read and prayed around the bed of his dying parent, and treasured up his last words, "My dear child, I feel that God my Saviour has pardoned all my sins; and from what you have just read, that his blood cleanseth from all iniquity, I derive great comfort, for he is my *only, only* hope."

The health of Lady Huntingdon was greatly invigorated by her residence at Bristol. Mrs. Whitefield had spent some time with her, and on her return to London in June, told Mr. Hervey at the Tabernacle house that the good Countess' health was very much restored, and that, to use her own expression, "She was charmingly well." From a letter of the Duchess of Somerset, dated July 9th, 1751, it appears that her Ladyship had removed to Cheltenham, and was in good health. She did not, however, stay long there, but visited Bath the end of August on a deeply interesting mission. The consumptive disease, from which Dr. Doddridge had long suffered, had made such rapid progress, that Dr. Stonhouse recommended him to try a voyage to Lisbon. He had been to Shrewsbury, for the benefit of the air and exercise; and spent some weeks at Bristol, where his kind friends did every thing to cheer his mind and recruit his health. As the worthy doctor hesitated to take the journey to

Portugal, lest the necessary expense should involve his family in difficulties, Lady Huntingdon, with that noble generosity which distinguished her character, collected among her friends the sum of three hundred pounds, of which she contributed *one hundred pounds,* and placed it in the hands of Mrs. Doddridge. She manifested the greatest sympathy towards the sufferer, and expressed herself truly grateful that she was able to administer to the external comfort of one of God's dear servants. Nor was this all. On the 17th of September, 1751, Dr. Doddridge left Bristol, and became the guest of the Countess at Bath, till his departure for Falmouth. Her time and attention were taken up with him; she provided for him every comfort that could be procured; and cheered him with her pious and animated conversation.

Dr. Doddridge met with many kind friends during his stay at her Ladyship's residence. Between him and Dr. Warburton there had existed a long friendship, which even the violence of the latter towards the Methodists did not impair. Dr. Oliver was his physician; and Mr. Allen, Dr. Hartley, then in the height of his reputation as a physician in Bath, and Pope frequently visited him. Their disputes respecting Whitefield, who had just embarked on his fourth voyage to America, frequently ran high and vehement. On one occasion, when her Ladyship was dining at Prior Park, the conversation happened to turn on her chaplain. Dr. Hartley spoke of his abilities with the warmest admiration, and supported the doctrines he preached. Warburton replied, "Of his oratorical powers, and their astonishing influence on the minds of thousands there can be no doubt; they are of a high order: but with respect to his doctrines, I consider them pernicious and false." An animated debate ensued; and Dr. Hartley defended Whitefield against the aspersions of his antagonist, and proved that his doctrines were in accordance with the Articles of the Established Church, and with the Confessions of Faith of all the Reformed Churches of Christendom. Lady Huntingdon, Dr. Oliver, and Mr. Allen concurred with him; and Warburton unable to restrain his malignity against the Methodists, rose up hastily, and abruptly left the room.

On the morning of the day on which Dr. Doddridge set out from Bath to Falmouth, Lady Huntingdon came into his room, and found him weeping over the passage in Daniel x., 11, 12. "You are in tears, Sir," said her Ladyship. "I *am* weeping, madam," answered the Doctor, "but they are tears of comfort and joy; I can give up my country, my relations, my friends into the hands of God; and as to myself I can as well go to heaven from Lisbon as from my own study at Northampton." His friends parted with him without the slightest expectation of seeing him again in this life. He embarked September 30th, and landed at Lisbon October 13th, 1751. He was then in a dying condition; and he lingered a few days before his happy spirit took its joyful flight to the mansions of glory, to receive the welcome from his Master, and to meet those who will be his crown of rejoicing. His remains were interred in the burying ground belonging to the British factory at Lisbon; and a handsome monument was erected by his congregation to his memory at Northampton. The news of his decease, though expected, cast a gloom over many circles. His warm and attached friend Dr. Stonhouse early communicated the intelligence to Lady Huntingdon, who says, "The death of my dear lamented Doddridge has affected my heart in a very uncommon manner, and I am often melted into tears when I reflect upon his unspeakable loss to the Church and the world." She bowed submissively to the stroke, and felt that the event only formed a stronger inducement to labour more earnestly for Christ, while her life was daily prolonged.

The serenity and divine happiness, which Doddridge enjoyed in the prospect of death, formed a strange contrast to the condition of his friend and physician at Bath, Dr. Oliver. He had acquired a large fortune by his profession, but remained an infidel till within a short time of his death. In his last illness, a strong conviction of the truth took possession of his mind; and Lady Huntingdon said she never saw a person more thoroughly humbled, distressed, and broken in heart. She visited him a few days before he died, when he deeply lamented his past infidelity, and his zeal and success in seducing the minds of others. "O! that I could undo the mischief I have done," he exclaimed, "I was more ardent to poison people with the principles of irreligion and unbelief, than almost any Christian can be to spread the doctrines of Christ." "Cheer up," replied her Ladyship, "Jesus, the great sacrifice for sin, atoned for the sins of the second table as well as for those of the first." "God certainly *can*," he answered, "but I fear he never *will* pardon such a wretch as I." "You may fear it at present," said Lady Huntingdon, "but you and I shall most certainly meet each other in heaven." The doctor exclaimed, "O woman! great is thy faith! my faith cannot believe that I shall ever be there." Light soon after broke in upon him; and he departed praising God for his unspeakable grace.

The intelligence of the decease of Dr. Doddridge was quickly followed by that of the death of Lord Bolingbroke. He had suffered severely from a cancer in the cheek-bone, and unwisely relinquished the services of a most accomplished surgeon for those of a notorious quack. He died in an awful manner, December 15th, 1751. His friendship for the Huntingdon family was sincere and affectionate; and to the day of his death, he expressed his admiration of the talents of Lady Huntingdon, and her devotedness to the cause of religion. He was seldom in her society without conversing with her on some religious topic, and always paid great attention to the remarks she made. On one occasion he asked, "How does your Ladyship reconcile prayer to God for particular blessings, with absolute resignation to the divine will?" "Very easily," replied the Countess, "just as if I was to offer a petition to a monarch, of whose kindness and wisdom I have the highest opinion. In such a case my language would be—'I wish you to bestow on me such a favour; but your Majesty knows better than I how far it would be agreeable to you, or right in itself to grant my desire. I, therefore, content myself with humbly presenting my petition, and leave the event of it entirely to you.'"

His Lordship's family were on terms of great intimacy with Lady Huntingdon. His second wife, the Marchioness of Villetta, a woman of superior accomplishments, and niece to the celebrated Madame de Maintenon, often attended the preaching of Whitefield at her residence; but his only sister, Lady Luxborough, the patroness of the poet Shenstone, could not be prevailed upon to listen to the glad tidings of the gospel. Her time was completely occupied with poets and literary acquaintances; and she passed her life amid the exciting scenes of fashionable society, and gave no attention to the concerns of her soul. Lady Huntingdon took a deep interest in her welfare, and often attempted to direct her thoughts to the serious consideration of religion. "Of Lord Bolingbroke and the Marchioness," she says, "I sometimes have a hope; they attend with such regularity, and hear with such apparent attention." Her hope, however, was never realized. Lord Bolingbroke gave orders that none of the clergy should be permitted to trouble him in his last moments, and died in the deistical principles which he had always avowed. His sister died a few years after; and Lady Huntingdon deeply lamented her end. "Unhappy woman! how insensible has she been to the many alarming calls of Providence which she has received from time to time. Such repeated deaths in her family, the awful end of her brother, Lord Bolingbroke, made no impression on her; and she left this world, as she had always lived, intoxicated with the vanity of her numerous accomplishments and literary acquirements."

Two years after the death of Lord Bolingbroke, his works were published by David Mallet, a determined infidel, and a man of worthless character, who had ingratiated himself into his favour by infamously blackening the memory of Pope. Lady Huntingdon was well aware of the character of the writings of the deceased nobleman, and made some fruitless attempts to prevent their publication. She wrote to Mr. Mallet, and used her influence with Lord Chesterfield and others, to try if possible to suppress what she knew would prove so detrimental to society. His works were refuted by a number of learned men. Bishops Clayton and Warburton, and Dr. Leland entered the lists against him; and Mr. Hervey dedicated to Lady Fanny Shirley his answer to the attack on religion contained in the "*Study and Use of History.*" Dr. Johnson pronounced this memorable verdict on the noble author, and his editor, "Sir, he was a scoundrel and a coward; a scoundrel, for charging a blunderbuss against religion and morality; a coward, because he had not resolution to fire it off himself, but left half-a-crown to a beggarly Scotchman to draw the trigger after his death!"

Lady Huntingdon spent the early part of 1752 in London, where her residence was crowded by the nobility and the poor to hear the gospel. Her eldest daughter, Lady Elizabeth Hastings, had been betrothed to Baron Rawdon, afterwards first Earl of Moira, and was in this year united to him. He was cousin-german to the Countess; and at the death of the young Earl of Huntingdon in 1789 obtained possession of the baronies connected with her

Ladyship's family. The Duchess of Somerset, writing to a friend, says:—

"Lady Rawdon's marriage has given unmingled satisfaction to all her family and friends, and Lady Huntingdon tells me she is extremely happy and contented. I rejoice at this, not only on her account, but on account of her worthy mother, who has certainly done her duty by her, and fulfilled her trust with the most scrupulous fidelity. Lady Selina is a great comfort to her, and is a most amiable, pious, and affectionate character. What an affliction is Lord Huntingdon's dislike to religion! and what have not my Lords Chesterfield and Bolingbroke to answer for? but he is most attentive, respectful, and kind to Lady Huntingdon. This is some consolation; and we may hope, that in the course of time, her example, and the excellent advice which he has received, may have their full weight of influence on his character. He is a most interesting, elegant, and accomplished young nobleman, and very likely to make some figure in the world. He was much affected at the death of Miss Hotham, to whom he is said to have been greatly attached; but of this I cannot speak with certainty, as Lady Huntingdon has never mentioned it to me."

Lady Huntingdon shortly after, retired to Bristol and Bath, where she was joined by Whitefield, who had lately returned from America. He arrived at Bath, June 22nd, and remained three weeks, preaching every evening to large numbers of the nobility. He here first became acquainted with Mrs. Grinfield, a lady who waited on Queen Caroline, and who had been awakened through the instrumentality of Lady Huntingdon. The Countess was acquainted with Beau Nash, the celebrated Master of the Ceremonies at Bath, who sometimes conversed with her on religious subjects, and was once prevailed upon to hear Whitefield at her house. He was congratulated on his conversion by his gay associates, who rallied him on his turning Methodist. Verses were written on her Ladyship and Nash, and were fastened to the walls of the pump-room and the assembly-room; and printed notices were circulated in every direction, announcing that "the Countess of Huntingdon, attended by some saintly sister, purposed preaching at the pump-room the following morning, and that Mr Nash, henceforth to be known as the *Rev. Richard Nash,* was expected to preach in the evening at the assembly-room." It was hoped that the audience would be numerous, as a collection was intended for the late Master of the Ceremonies, on his retirement from office. This affair gave great offence to Beau Nash; he never could be prevailed upon to go to Lady Huntingdon's house again; and he passed his old age in vice and pleasure, and trembled when he saw the approach of death, in the eighty-seventh year of his age, 1761. Whitefield spent four days at Bristol, and then journeyed through the Welsh circuit: and in the space of a fortnight, travelled three hundred miles, and preached twenty times to very large congregations. Lady Huntingdon continued her residence at Bath for a considerable time, and employed her talents and opportunities in promoting the interests of religion.

At this period Mr. Hervey was much occupied with his admirable work entitled "*Theron and Aspasio.*" He had submitted the manuscript pages to Whitefield, and asked his opinion of them; who says, "For me to play the critic on them would be like holding up a candle to the sun." Lady Huntingdon was an ardent admirer of the writings of Mr. Hervey. She had read his "*Meditations*" with great pleasure and profit, and had much enjoyed his society, and his spiritual conversation at her house. Anything, therefore, which came from his pen would be perused by her with attention and delight. He wrote a long letter to her Ladyship, in which he says:—

"Your Ladyship is pleased to express a wish that I should proceed without delay in finishing my intended work. Be assured your wishes, Madam, have all the force of a command with me. I send you the first four dialogues, beseeching you to peruse them, not with the partiality of a friend, but the severity of a critic. The like request I have made to others, and have received their friendly corrections. I am deeply sensible of my own deficiencies, and in order, therefore, to render my work, if possible, fit for public view—meet for the Master's use—I shall feel obliged by any corrections and improvements which your pen may make. Your Ladyship is at liberty to show the manuscript to whom you please. Your remarks and those of your friends, may supply the sterility of my invention, and the poverty of my language."

Lady Huntingdon took a deep interest in the progress and success of the work. She showed the manuscript to her most distinguished acquaintances, and discussed its merits with those ministers and friends who met at her residence. The opinions expressed were diversified. Some admired his style of writing, to which others objected, as too florid and laboured; though all admitted that the doctrines expounded were vital truths of Christianity, except Mr. Hartley, who objected to the doctrine of the *imputed* righteousness of Christ, and gave it as his opinion, that it would be better to suppress, than to publish the work. Mr. Hervey wished to obtain permission to dedicate the work to Lady Huntingdon, but she declined the honor; and, in a letter to her, he says:—

"Accept my thanks for taking the trouble of perusing my very imperfect manuscript, and my grateful acknowledgments for the improving touches and remarks you have made, as well as for those of your highly valuable friends and acquaintances. The corrections you have done me the honour to transmit will be exceedingly beneficial to the work, and render it more acceptable to the public in general. But I confess I feel disappointed at your Ladyship's declining to patronize the public attempt of my pen; nevertheless your observations are so sensible and just, and carry with them so much weight, that I cannot think of pressing the matter on your attention, further than to solicit your prayers for the success of the undertaking, and for the unworthy author."

During his stay in London, Mr. Hervey had preached several times at the residence of Lady Fanny Shirley, with whom he maintained an uninterrupted correspondence until his death. He became a great favourite with her Ladyship, and obtained her consent to dedicate his new work to her. Through her influence, it was introduced to the notice of Royalty: for he says, "I should never have been known to such grand personages, if you had not condescended to introduce me. My name had never been heard by a royal ear, if it had not received some credit by your Ladyship's notice." It was at her request Mr. Hervey drew up his "*Letter*" containing his remarks on Lord Bolingbroke's "*Letters on the Study and Use of History*," which was addressed to her Ladyship.

In December 1752, Lady Huntingdon changed her residence to Clifton, where Charles Wesley had lately fixed his abode, after his marriage with the daughter of M. Gwynne, Esq., of Garth. Mrs. Wesley was a lady of good sense, piety, and agreeable accomplishments; with whom Lady Huntingdon formed an intimate friendship, which continued till her death. Mr. C. Wesley was often at her house, where he frequently preached and administered the sacrament to many distinguished persons. Whitefield was, at this time, in the midst of his labours in London, though he still kept up his regular correspondence with the Countess. He was constantly engaged at the residence of Lady Fanny Shirley, in South Audley-Street, preaching the gospel and administering the sacrament. His Tabernacle at Moorfields was crowded, and was far too small to accommodate the persons who flocked to it. During his visit to Ashby, Lady Huntingdon suggested to him the erection of a larger edifice, to which she promised to contribute, and to use her influence with her friends to secure their support. Lady Fanny Shirley now joined in urging, that active steps should be immediately taken to carry out the design. Whitefield yielded to their entreaties, and commenced the preparations: though he determined not to begin the building till a sufficient sum had been collected. He says in a letter, dated February 9th, 1753, "It would have pleased your Ladyship to have seen how willingly the people gave last Lord's day. At seven in the morning we collected fifty pounds, in the evening one hundred and twenty-six. Blessed be God, we have now near nine hundred pounds in hand." Lady Huntingdon contributed handsomely towards its erection; in fact her generosity sometimes required curbing, as she had been greatly imposed upon by designing persons under the ostensible purpose of promoting the conversion of the Jews. Her chaplain wrote to her, "Your Ladyship wants a bridle rather than a spur." The foundation stone was laid, March 1st, 1753, when Whitefield preached to a crowded assembly. The new Tabernacle was so much larger than the old, that the congregation was able to assemble in the original structure while the walls were being built around it. The building was rapidly reared, and on the 10th of the following June, it was opened for divine service. More than five thousand persons crowded to the place, to whom Whitefield preached with his accustomed eloquence and power.

Lady Huntingdon continued at Clifton till the latter end of this year, and intended to visit Bath as soon as the

Tabernacle at Bristol had been opened. After preaching a short time in his new Tabernacle in London, Whitefield set out on an excursion to Scotland. He preached to great numbers in Northamptonshire and Leicestershire, and met with much success in Yorkshire. At Rotherham he was gratified by the kind reception he received from those who formerly had been his bitter persecutors, but had been converted through his ministrations. After three months' incessant labour, preaching often to ten and twenty thousand persons, he returned to London. His stay, however, was short; and he set out for Staffordshire, and itinerated in the neighboring counties. Every resting place was a preaching station; and amid much opposition and not a few dangers, he proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation wherever he went. His Tabernacle at Bristol was nearly completed, and he anxiously awaited the time when it could be publicly dedicated to the service of the Lord. The building was at length finished; and on the 25th of November, 1753, he opened this spacious chapel, and preached to crowded congregations. He says:—

"On Sunday I opened the new Tabernacle. It is large but not half large enough; would the place contain them, I believe nearly as many would attend as in London.* * * On Tuesday, at seven in the evening, I preached in the open air to a great multitude; all was hushed and exceedingly solemn; the stars shone bright; and then, if ever, by an eye of faith I saw Him who called them all by their names. My soul was filled with a holy ambition, and I longed to be one of those who shall shine as the stars for ever and ever My hands and body, at this and at other times, were pierced with cold; but what are outward things when the soul is warmed with the love of God."

Whitefield also preached in his brother's large house to the nobility, who were induced to attend through the influence of Lady Huntingdon. Shortly after the dedication, her Ladyship retired to Bath; but she quickly hastened back to Bristol to attend Mrs. Charles Wesley in an alarming and infectious disorder. Her devotedness and kindness, could not be restrained by fear; her love grew warmer in the presence of danger; and her soul panted for an opportunity of displaying her tender care and anxious solicitude for those in sorrow or affliction. The Countess possessed, and on many occasions displayed, true heroism; not that which sparkles on the battle field, and is paraded before the world; but that which, unseen by men, braves a thousand dangers and obstacles, and defies the sarcasms of the rich and mighty, in attempting to direct the soul to God, to peace, and to heaven.

CHAPTER IX. A. D. 1751—1753.

ILLNESS OF JOHN WESLEY AND MRS. C. WESLEY.—LADY HUNTINGDON IN YORKSHIRE.—AWFUL OCCURRENCE.—HER LABOURS IN LONDON, ASHBY, AND YORKSHIRE.—DEATH OF LADY ANNE HASTINGS.—WHITEFIELD AT DONNINGTON PARK.—TABERNACLE AT NORWICH.—REV. W. ROMAINE APPOINTED HER CHAPLAIN.—THE COUNTESS AT BATH.—MEETING OF THE CLERGY AT HER HOUSE.—LONG-ACRE AND TOTTENHAM COURT CHAPELS. SHUTER THE COMEDIAN.—LADY HUNTINGDON VISITS BRIGHTON.—THE WOMEN'S COTTAGE-MEETING.—JOSEPH WALL THE BLACKSMITH.—DEATH OF HENRY HASTINGS.

DURING the year 1753, Mr. John Wesley had laboured so diligently, and travelled so much, that he greatly impaired his constitution. On his return to London, from a tour in the Isle of Wight, he was repeatedly attacked with violent colds; which produced such painful results, as to threaten his life. By the advice of Dr. Fothergill, he retired, early in October, to Lewisham, for the benefit of rest and country air: where he was so thoroughly prostrated, that his life was despaired of. He there wrote his own Epitaph, as he says, "to prevent vile panegyric;" and Whitefield in a letter expressed his fear "that shortly John Wesley will be no more, as the physicians think his disease is a rapid consumption." Charles Wesley hurried to London to visit his brother, and preach in his chapels; and while thus engaged, received the mournful intelligence that his wife had been seized with the small-pox. His situation was exceedingly painful; the death of his brother was daily expected; the congregations could not be left unprovided for; and his heart longed to see and console his beloved partner. Lady Huntingdon immediately came from Bath; and, at the risk of losing her own life, by that disease which had made such ravages in her family, she attended Mrs. Wesley throughout her illness.

Whitefield was then at Bristol, and wrote a sympathizing letter to Charles Wesley. "Now is the time," he says, "to prove the strength of Jesus yours. A wife, a friend, a brother ill together! Well! this is our comfort—all things shall work together for good to those that love God." He also wrote to John Wesley, and expressed how deeply he felt the affliction which God had placed upon him. "If seeing you so weak, when leaving London, distressed me, the news and prospect of your approaching dissolution hath quite weighed me down. I pity myself and the Church, but not you. A radiant throne awaits you, and ere long you will enter your Master's joy. Yonder he stands with a massy crown, ready to put it on your head, amidst an admiring throng of saints and angels." He set off to London the next day to relieve Charles Wesley, and enable him to see his beloved wife, before the disease had accomplished its deadly work. She remained in imminent danger for twenty-two days. He rode down to visit her twice; and during the interval of his visits, his first child, a lovely boy scarcely two years old, took the infection from the mother, and was buried before the father returned again. Some of his funeral hymns were composed on this occasion, and describe the feelings of his heart at the affecting circumstance. Lady Huntingdon was unremitting in her attention to the bereaved lady; and her cheerful and encouraging conversation greatly stimulated and refreshed the mind of the sufferer. Whitefield was very much afraid her Ladyship would injure her own health by her close attendance in the sick room. In a letter to her, dated December 15th, he says, "I am yet kept in suspense about Mrs. Wesley, and have been much concerned lest, by intense sympathy, your Ladyship should contract an illness yourself. But you have long since learnt that as your day is, so your strength shall be. I pray the Lord of all lords to lengthen out your important life, and to make you ten thousand times more useful than ever, long after my worthless head is laid in the silent grave." Not long after this, a letter from Lady Huntingdon announced the pleasing intelligence, that Mrs. Wesley was pronounced out of danger by her physician, who entertained sanguine hopes of her speedy restoration. John Wesley also was rapidly recovering; and Whitefield joined heartily in the public thanks which were offered at the Tabernacle for their restoration to health.

Lady Huntingdon spent the summer of 1754 at Ashby-de-la-Zouch, where she was visited by Mr. Ingham, who preached frequently in the neighbourhood during his stay. Whitefield had embarked with twenty-two poor destitute orphans for America, where he remained a year, attending to the affairs of his Bethesda, and preaching the gospel to the negroes, and to the large cities in the States. Lady Huntingdon returned with Mr. Ingham to Aberford, and passed some delightful weeks in the company of her excellent sister-in-law, Lady Margaret, and in revisiting those spots where she had once witnessed the triumphs of the gospel. She had occasionally accompanied her chaplain in his excursions into Yorkshire, and was highly delighted with the magnificent spectacle, which the assembled thousands presented. The prayers were then generally read in the church; a scaffold was erected in the churchyard, on which the preacher stood; and the Lord's Supper was administered after the discourse to as many as the church would contain, and was repeated till all had communicated. On one of these occasions, Whitefield mounted the scaffold to address a very large assembly. He silently prayed for a few minutes; then glanced at the people, and fervently implored the divine blessing to rest upon them. With deep solemnity he announced the text, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." After a short pause, he was about to proceed, when a wild terrifying shriek issued from the centre of the congregation. Alarm seized the assembled multitude; Whitefield stopped; and Mr. Grimshaw hastened to the spot. He soon after pressed through the crowd to the scaffold, and cried out with a voice, rendered peculiarly impressive by the intensity of his feelings, "Brother Whitefield! you stand amongst the dead and the dying—an immortal soul has been called into eternity—the destroying angel is passing over the congregation. Cry aloud, and spare not! The awful occurrence was made known to the people; and after a few moments' silence, Whitefield once more announced his text. Again a loud piercing cry proceeded from the spot where Lady Huntingdon and Lady Margaret Ingham were standing. A thrill of horror ran through the assembly, when it was announced that a second person had fallen a victim to the king of terrors. It was some time before the consternation had sufficiently subsided to enable Whitefield to proceed with his sermon. At length all was hushed by the solemn music of his voice; a death-like stillness pervaded the assembly; and when he poured out his streams of impassionate eloquence in warning the careless sinner to flee from the wrath to come, the entire mass of the people seemed overpowered, and surrendered themselves to the influence of the truth.

The Countess continued for some time at Aberford, and thence proceeded to London. "I was surprised," says the Duchess of Somerset, "to meet Lady Huntingdon on the road last Saturday fortnight; she was on her way to London, but her coach drove by so fast that I had only time to send Lomas after her with my compliments; she seemed to me to look as well as ever I saw her." Here she remained during the winter, zealously employed in gathering around her the noble and the rich to hear the gospel, and in fostering the spirit of unity among the devoted ministers of Christ. She was extremely anxious on behalf of those who had been impressed with the truth; and watched over them with great solicitude, lest the sneers of friends, or the gaieties of the world, should obliterate the impressions, and destroy the good which had been effected. She was a true mother in Israel, and divided her attention equally between the rich and the poor. To save a soul was an object worthy of her ambition; and one which amply compensated for the time, talents, and substance she consecrated to the service of the Lord. Thousands will bless God for her kindness to their souls, as thousands, during her life, blessed her for the temporal gifts she bestowed upon them.

In May 1755, Whitefield returned to England, and on his arrival at London found that Lady Huntingdon had left the metropolis for Ashby. He was highly gratified by receiving from her Ladyship a liberal donation for his Bethesda, and by the intelligence that so many had been stirred up to preach a crucified Saviour during his absence. Mr. Ingham again visited her Ladyship at Ashby, and preached at her house, and in the neighborhood, to numerous congregations. On his return to Yorkshire, she accompanied him, and visited most of the societies in the vicinity of Aberford. During her stay in Yorkshire, a general meeting of preachers was held at Winewall, when some interesting points of doctrine and church government were discussed, and Mr. Ingham was appointed the general overseer of the societies. Her Ladyship, therefore, henceforth styled him "*The Bishop*." She was far from approving many of the rules and regulations adopted by the conference, and attempted to effect a union with the followers of Wesley. After she left, she induced Whitefield, when in the north, to confer with Messrs. Ingham, Grimshaw, and the Wesleys on the subject. Charles Wesley assented to the proposal, but his brother decidedly objected to it; and the line of demarcation gradually became so much broader, that the attempt to unite the *Inghamites* with the Methodists was not renewed.

Lady Huntingdon was now bereaved of her sister-in-law, Lady Anne Hastings, who was removed to her eternal rest after a short illness, July 1st, 1755, in the sixty-fifth year of her age. Lady Anne had been a most valuable assistant to the Countess in her benevolent exertions. She united with her in visiting the poor, and directing them to Christ; she was her constant attendant in sickness, and greatly cheered her by the simplicity of her faith, the happiness of her heart, and the foretastes of heaven which filled her with peace and joy. Whitefield heard of her death at Bristol, and wrote a sympathizing letter to the Countess. He says, "I heard of the death of good Lady Anne, and was glad to find that Miss Wheeler bore the news of it with so much composure. Alas! how many has your Ladyship lived to see go before you! An earnest this, I hope, that you are to live to a good old age, and be more and more a mother in Israel. A short, but sweet character."

The Countess spent a few months at Donnington Park, while the Earl was at Bath. She was here visited by her chaplain on his way into Yorkshire, and delighted to renew her acquaintance with her poor friends. She recommenced her little meetings, and embraced every opportunity of directing the soul to the Lord Jesus. Whitefield enjoyed his visit to the old family mansion, and in a letter to her Ladyship, dated September 24th, says, "A sense of the satisfaction I felt when at Donnington still lies upon my heart. Surely were I not called out to public work, waiting upon and administering to your Ladyship in the holy offices would be my choice and highest privilege."

Lady Huntingdon was at this time greatly interested in the religious condition of Norwich. Towards the end of 1751, a gentleman slowly rode into the city, and stopped before one of the inns, where he asked a soldier on guard, if he knew any religious people in the city. It was the Rev. James Wheatley, who had been a popular preacher in Wesley's societies. The soldier conducted him to a little band of puritans, with whom this minister commenced his labours. His first sermon was preached under the trees on Tomb-land, and his second at the Felon's Gate, Castle Hill. He soon created great excitement, and, drew upon himself the bitter hostility of many. Finding it impossible to preach in the open air, he erected a temporary building, which he called the Tabernacle. This, however, only increased the persecuting spirit of the people. The windows were broken; the chapel was completely unroofed, and Mr. Wheatley was publicly insulted. They once drew him from the chapel, stripped him, and hurried him to one of the bridges to drown him, where he was mercifully rescued by the mayor. His life was frequently in danger from the fury of the mobs; and he was often dragged by the hair of his head through the streets of the city. His preaching, however, was very successful; many of the most profligate and abandoned characters became reformed; and he succeeded in gathering a considerable society. The manner in which he bore the persecutions of his enemies turned the tide in his favour; and his friends began to erect the noble and spacious chapel, which still retains the name of the former building, "*The Tabernacle.*" Whitefield spent a few days in Norwich in April 1753, and preached to very large crowds of people, notwithstanding the opposition he experienced. Through his representations, Lady Huntingdon contributed a handsome sum towards the erection of the New Tabernacle, and was glad to see the gospel triumphing in that dark and profligate city.

The fair prospect of success was soon blighted by the conduct of Mr. Wheatley, who was obliged to leave the city for a time under very distressing circumstances. Mr. and Mrs. C. Wesley and his brother arrived there at this critical period, and found the whole city in an uproar respecting the late minister. "The people," says Wesley, "are so scandalized and exasperated that they are ready to rise and tear him to pieces." John Wesley soon left the place, but Charles preached in the open air to many thousands. "At night," he says, "I had multitudes of the great, vulgar, and the small to hear me, with three justices, and nine clergymen." He rented a large brewhouse, and rapidly formed a society in Norwich, though he was frequently mobbed and disturbed, and his wife hooted at by the rabble. Before Whitefield visited Donnington Park in 1755, Lady Huntingdon requested him to open the New Tabernacle at Norwich. He repaired thither early in August, and attracted an unusual crowd to hear him. The design of his preaching in this city was misrepresented, by some malicious persons, to John Wesley, who sternly remonstrated with him for having intruded on the scene of his labours. Whitefield thus wrote to Wesley, dated Norwich, August 9th.

"Till Tuesday evening, I knew no more of coming to Norwich than the child unborn. Had I been well enough, and my private business permitted, I should have been some miles in my way towards Donnington Park. This I told Mr. Hartley, and acquainted him with every step; he should have written himself, and not retailed our conversation. As I expect to be in town some time next week, I choose to defer writing more till we have a personal interview. My time is too precious to be employed hearkening to, or vindicating myself against, the false and invidious insinuations of narrow and low-life informers. Never was I more satisfied of my call to any place, than of my present call to Norwich. The Redeemer knows the way that I take. I came hither purely for his glory, without the least design to make a party for myself, or to please or to displease any other party whatsoever. In this way, and in this spirit, through his divine assistance, I hope to go on. Blessed be his name, I trust my feeble labours have not been in vain. Sin, I hope, hath been prevented, errors detected, sinners convicted, saints edified, and my own soul sweetly refreshed."

It was at the request of Colonel and Mrs. Galatin, who had been for some time at Norwich, and had formed an intimacy with many of the religious people there, that Lady Huntingdon sent her chaplain to preach at the dedication of the Tabernacle. The chapel was supplied by several ministers, chiefly in connexion with Whitefield, till the year 1758, when John Wesley rented it of Mr. Wheatley for a few years; and it afterwards came into the possession of Lady Huntingdon.

It was about this period, the Countess took under her protection a celebrated metropolitan preacher, by appointing him one of her chaplains. William Romaine was the son of a French refugee, who had been driven from his country by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. He had for a long time occupied a high position in London, where he was almost the only minister in the Church of England who preached the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel of Christ. He had filled the office of chaplain to the Lord Mayor of London with great satisfaction to his friend, Sir D. Lambert; attacked the theory of *Warburton's Divine Legation of Moses*; issued an elaborate edition of

Calasio's Hebrew Concordance and Lexicon; and faithfully discharged his duties as lecturer in two of the city churches. He held a lectureship at St. Dunstan's in the West, and was appointed assistant morning-preacher at St. George's, Hanover Square. In these two churches, he preached the gospel with great simplicity and boldness. His voice, his manner, and especially the truths he declared, attracted the attention of the people. He read his sermons with an energy and a pathos which powerfully impressed his hearers. His fame, therefore, spread far and wide; St. George's church was crowded with attentive audiences; the parishioners complained that they were incommoded; the neighbouring clergy were jealous of his popularity and opposed him; and in September, 1755, the rector was induced to dismiss him, because, like the Apostle Paul, Romaine "determined to know nothing among men save Jesus Christ and him crucified." He was turned out of St. George's church; but reluctant to part with many friends, who were dear to him, and who wished still to profit by his labours, he met them regularly at the house of Mr. Butcher. Lord Northampton, who had married the Baroness Ferrars, a relative of Lady Huntingdon, was a great friend to Romaine, and had often spoken of him to her Ladyship. To shelter this eminent minister from persecution, she invited him to her house, gave him her scarf, and secured his services to preach to the nobility in her drawing rooms, the poor in her kitchen, and in the numerous chapels which she ultimately erected in various parts of the country.

Lady Huntingdon passed the winter at Bath, in the midst of a large circle of friends. Lady Gertrude Hotham had been there during the summer, and was visited by Lords Chesterfield and Huntingdon, Mr. Stanhope, Mrs. Bevan, and Mrs. Grinfield; and Whitefield had frequently preached there at the residence of Lady Gertrude and Mrs. Bevan to large audiences of the nobility. Lady Huntingdon immediately commenced her labours to further the interests of true religion. On her last visit to this city, she had invited to her house a number of the neighbouring evangelical clergy, to consult upon the best means to be adopted to secure a wider circulation of divine truth throughout the kingdom, and especially in their respective cures. In the month of January, 1756, the invitation was repeated, and the following band of zealous ministers met at her house:—the Revs. Messrs. Chapman, vicar, and Brown, curate of Bradford; Hart, curate of Warminster; Johnston, curate of Cirencester; Rawlings, vicar of Padstow; Hill, rector of Tavistock; and a few others. During their stay, they frequently preached to numerous audiences; and their sermons were listened to with great attention, and made useful to many. Her own spirit was much refreshed by these meetings, which she continued for a number of years; and her clerical friends were accustomed to hail her arrival at Bath as a time of peculiar pleasure and profit to them. She was thus enabled to stimulate the faith and zeal of these devoted ministers of Christ; and they returned to their duties with a stronger determination to devote themselves to their sacred calling, and to make everything subservient to the one grand object of winning souls to Christ.

Meanwhile Whitefield was breaking up fresh ground in London. Long Acre Chapel had been for some time used as a Dissenting place of worship; and Whitefield was requested to preach there twice a week, and use the Liturgy. Regarding the offer as a providential call, he readily complied with the request; and commenced preaching there, December 23rd, 1755. A violent storm of persecution soon burst over him. Some soldiers united with the rabble, and raised a terrible clamour during the service with a copper-furnace, bells, drums, and clappers; and a mob collected round the door, and assaulted the preacher and his congregation. Whitefield applied to the magistrates for protection, and wrote to the Bishop of Bangor, then Dean of Westminster, requesting his permission to officiate in the chapel. The magistrates silenced the mob for a time; but the Bishop prohibited him from preaching there again. A long controversy ensued; Whitefield continued his services; and the Bishop's partizans co-operated with the rioters to put down the eloquent minister. As the uproar increased, Whitefield resolved to appeal to His Majesty; for which a letter was sent to him, threatening his life. By the advice of Lady Huntingdon, he consulted the Hon. Hume Campbell, an eminent solicitor, and occasionally one of his audience; who advised him to put all concerned into the court of King's Bench. One effect of this persecution was, to induce him to erect a permanent place of worship at the west end of London. He thus writes to Lady Huntingdon, May 2nd, 1756:—

"I suppose your Ladyship hath seen His Majesty's promise of a pardon to any that will discover the letter-writer; and this brings your Ladyship the further news of my having taken a piece of ground very commodious to build on, not far from the Foundling Hospital. On Sunday I opened the subscription, and through God's blessing, it hath already amounted to near six hundred pounds. If he is pleased to continue to smile upon my poor endeavours, and to open the hearts of some more of his dear children to contribute, I hope in a few months to have what hath been long wanted—a place for the gospel at the other end of the town. This evening, God willing, I venture once more to preach at Long Acre. The enemy boasts that I am frightened away; but the triumph of the wicked is short. Our people Sir Hume Campbell, Mr.

Madan, &c., are all for bringing the rioters to the King's bench, and, perhaps, upon the whole, it may be best. Lord Jesus, direct my goings in thy way!"

The foundation stone of Tottenham-Court Chapel was laid, with great solemnity, in the beginning of May, 1756, when Whitefield was assisted by three celebrated Dissenting ministers, Dr. Grosvenor, Dr. Gibbons, and Dr. Gifford, who occasionally preached for him at the Tabernacle. It was his intention to place this chapel under the protection of Lady Huntingdon; and he took some steps to accomplish it. He wrote to her from London, June 4th:—

"In hopes of seeing your Ladyship, I hastened to Bristol, but found you had been in London whilst I was there. Sorry was I for the occasion of your Ladyship's journey, and yet glad to hear that Master Hastings was so well recovered. * * * We have consulted the Commons about putting it under your Ladyship's protection. This is the answer:—'No nobleman can license a chapel, or in any manner have one, but in his dwelling house; that the chapel must be a private one, and not with doors to the street for any person to resort to at pleasure, for then it becomes a public one; that a chapel cannot be built and used as such, without the consent of the parson of the parish, and when it is done with his consent, no minister can preach therein, without license of the Bishop of the diocese.' There seems then to be but one way—to license it as our other houses are; and thanks be to Jesus for that liberty which we have."

Lady Huntingdon visited Donnington Park this summer, and then went to Clifton to her usual circle of friends, and her accustomed sphere of usefulness. She contributed liberally towards the erection of the new chapel; and Whitefield embraced the opportunity, while it was building, to itinerate in England and Scotland. He returned to London; and opened the spacious edifice for divine worship, according to the forms of the Church of England, November 7th, 1756. The chapel was soon crowded, and many were induced to pay attention to the claims of religion. A neighbouring doctor facetiously termed it "*Whitefield's soul-trap*," as so many were there convinced of sin, and brought to the feet of Jesus. Among his frequent hearers was Shuter the Comedian, then in the height of his reputation as the representative of "*Ramble*." On one occasion, when Whitefield was inviting sinners to come to the Saviour, he fixed his eye on Shuter, who was seated in a pew exactly opposite the pulpit, and said to him, "And thou poor Ramble, who hast long rambled from Him, come thou also, and end thy ramblings by coming to Jesus!" Shuter was exceedingly struck; and after the service he came to Whitefield, and said, "I thought I should have fainted; how could you serve me so?" This attractive actor was, at one time deeply impressed with the truth, and often regretted the part he had performed in life. He once visited Lady Huntingdon in Bath, when he was performing in that city. Her Ladyship met him in the street; and though personally unknown to him, inquired after his health, and invited him to her house. In a letter to Lady Fanny Shirley she says:—

> "I have had a visit from Shuter, the comedian, whom I saw in the street, and asked to call on me. He was wonderfully astonished when I announced my name. We had much conversation; but he cannot give up his profession for another more reputable. He spoke of Mr. Whitefield with great affection, and with admiration of his talents. He promised to come some other time, when he had more leisure for conversation. Poor fellow! I think he is not far from the kingdom."

The attractions of his profession, however, soon nipped the buds of promise, and dissipated the hopes which his religious friends had fondly cherished.

The Tottenham-Court Chapel speedily became too small to hold the crowds that flocked to it. Twelve alms-houses and a chapel house were built in 1758; and in the next year it was enlarged by the addition of an octangular front. Whitefield continued the sole minister for many years, and then associated with himself Captain Joss, whom he had persuaded to give up maratime pursuits for the service of the sanctuary, and whose thrilling sermons attracted vast multitudes, and were very useful. Rowland Hill was a great favourite at this chapel; and for more than fifty years, the Rev. Matthew Wilks preached the gospel here, and at the Tabernacle. During Whitefield's absence, the affairs were regulated by his appointed managers, who invited to the pulpit many ministers of zeal and piety, who were anxious to preach Christ, and were acceptable to the people. We shall frequently see the names of many distinguished men, in connection with this place of worship, who were intimately associated with Lady Huntingdon in the service of Jesus Christ.

The Countess was much alarmed for the safety of her fourth son, the Hon. Henry Hastings, who was in a very delicate state of health; and her chaplain feared that her anxiety would bring upon herself an attack of the gout. She was also deeply interested in the case of an unhappy youth, belonging to an honorable family, who had been convicted of some serious breach of the law, but had obtained His Majesty's pardon, through the benevolent exertions of the Countess. The young man appears to have been greatly benefited by her kindness and advice. Her liberality was also extended to some convicts, in whose welfare Whitefield felt a lively interest. In a letter to her, dated March 2nd, 1757, he says:—

"A few days ago I received the kind benefaction for the unhappy convicts. Not doubting of success, I had advanced some guineas which, with what hath been procured from other hands, hath bought both their liberties, and they are provided for on the other side of the water; just now, I believe, they are under sail. O that he, who I suppose will now receive a pardon, was alike favoured! But not many mighty, not many noble, are called. I hope this will not find your Ladyship ill of the gout. May the Lord Jesus bear all your sickness, and heal all your infirmities, both of body and soul! I am sensibly touched when anything affects your Ladyship; gratitude constrains to this."

The continued illness of her son induced Lady Huntingdon to visit Brighton, in the summer of 1757. That town was then rising in importance as a fashionable watering-place; but like too many towns in England was in a very benighted condition. Her Ladyship was greatly concerned for the spiritual welfare of the inhabitants and the visitors; and used her utmost exertion to benefit them by carrying the glad tidings of salvation to the houses of the rich and the poor. In the course of one of these visits of mercy, she entered the lodgings of a soldier's wife, who was in, and having relieved her temporal wants, she conversed with the woman on religious topics, and pointed her to the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. Her manner arrested the attention of the invalid: her zeal was tempered with discretion, and her solemnity softened with sweetness; and when the Countess spoke of the corrupt state of the heart, and the awful danger which threatened the sinner, the woman burst into tears, and cried out for God to have mercy on her soul. Lady Huntingdon renewed her visits, and was greatly encouraged by the evident anxiety of the woman to hear the way of salvation through Christ. The room in which she was lying was contiguous to a public bakehouse; and the people who came to the oven, heard, through a crack in the wall, the glad tidings which her Ladyship proclaimed. The affair soon became the subject of conversation among the neighbours; and other poor women came to the lodgings of the soldier's wife to listen to the story of Christ crucified. Her Ladyship took great delight in this little meeting, and beheld with satisfaction, the number of persons who attended rapidly increasing. She met them as often as they could come together, and generally read and expounded the Scriptures to them, prayed with them, and conversed on the unsearchable riches of Christ. No spectacle could be more beautiful than this lovely scene; the highest and the lowest were attracted to each other: and the peeress displayed her true nobility and greatness when she was seated in the rude hovel, surrounded by these poor creatures. Her fervent and affectionate heart yearned for their salvation; her earnestness convinced them that she was deeply interested in their welfare; and her subject, her language, the tones of her voice, and her benevolent countenance, conspired to fix their attention, and affect their hearts.

Though the meeting was confined to women, on one occasion, a blacksmith, named Joseph Wall, a man notorious for his profligacy, discovered the sacred retreat, and obtained admittance. When the Countess came on her accustomed visit, she was greatly surprised at seeing him in a corner of the room, and hesitated whether to request him to withdraw or to speak to him. She, however, determined to take no notice of him, and to proceed in her usual manner, to pray with and instruct the poor women. The word spoken was applied by the Holy Spirit to the heart of the blacksmith; a marvellous change appeared in his life; and he became a distinguished monument to the power of divine grace. For a period of twenty-nine years, he adorned the doctrines of God his Saviour by a life of holiness, and patiently awaited his dismissal to glory. He told a friend, a day or two before his departure, that he longed to be dissolved, that he was very happy, and had not a doubt of his salvation, and would not change his state with the King. In his last hour, his lips moved slightly; and when his daughter bent over him, she heard him faintly breathe the prayer, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." It was soon answered; and he departed to his heavenly rest, one of the first-fruits of the abundant harvest which has been gathered from Brighton, through the instrumentality of Lady Huntingdon.

Though her Ladyship's efforts were greatly blessed to the spiritual welfare of many, all her care and attention could not stay the progress of disease in her son. He died at Brighton in the eighteenth year of his age, September 13th, 1757. She deeply felt the blow, yet she knew it was her duty to be resigned to the will of her heavenly Father. It is to be regretted that the only record of this event is contained in the following letter of Whitefield to her.

"London, October 21st, 1757.

"Ever honoured Madam,

"I burnt, but I believe I shall never forget the contents of your Ladyship's letter. Who but the Redeemer himself can possibly describe the yearnings of such a tender parent's heart? Surely your Ladyship is called to cut off a right hand, and pluck out a right eye: but "it is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth him good." This was the language of Eli, whose sons were sinners before the Lord exceedingly. This hath often been the case of the best of people, and the greatest favourites of heaven; but none knows the bitterness of such a cup, but those who are called to drink it. If not sweetened with a sense of the love and mercy of God in Christ, who could abide it? O what physic, what strong physic, do our strong affections oblige our heavenly Father to give us! What pruning knives do these luxuriant branches require, in order to preserve the fruit and delicacy of the vine. Blessed be God, there is a time coming, when these mysterious dignified providences shall be explained. I am glad Mr. L. is with your Ladyship; he has a friendly heart. May the Lord Jesus raise up your Ladyship many comforters. Above all may he come himself. He will, he will. * * * O that I could bear part of your Ladyship's heavy load! But I can only in my feeble way bear it on my heart before him, who came to heal our sicknesses and bear our infirmities. That your Ladyship may come out of these firery trials, purged and purified, like the brightest gold, is the earnest prayer of your Ladyship's most dutiful, obliged, smypathizing, and very ready servant for Christ's sake,

"GEORGE WHITEFIELD."

Lady Huntingdon retired to Clifton to enjoy a season of solitude after her berervement. Amid all her efforts for Christ she never forgot the duties of her social circle. She watched over her children with more than maternal tenderness; she pointed them to the Saviour, and, to use the beautiful figure of Goldsmith,

> "And, as a bird, each fond endearment tries
> To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies,
> *She* tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
> Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way."

She was abundantly repaid for all her care by the affectionate regard they manifested towards her; and though she bitterly lamented the impiety of her eldest son, the Earl, she retained a strong hold upon his love, which, neither his principles, nor his contact with the world, could destroy. He respected her opinions and feelings, and never attempted to thwart any of her plans, though he had no sympathy with her spiritual religion.

The Countess enjoyed in her retreat, much of the presence of Christ, and the consolations of many distinguished friends; her heart was gently chastened, her piety received a more heavenly tone, her will became more thoroughly subdued to the will of God; and she renewed her vow of consecration to the service of Christ, and stimulated her faith and zeal to enter the useful and blessed career which was widely opening to her.

CHAPTER X. A. D. 1757—1760.

REVIVAL OF RELIGION IN THE ESTABLISHMENT.—REV. HENRY VENN PREACHES AT HER LADYSHIP'S MANSION. —MESSRS. MADAN AND ROMAINE ITINERATE FOR HER.— REV. JOHN FLETCHER.—THE COUNTESS AT BATH.—THE FAST-DAY IN LONDON.—SPECIAL SERVICES.—SACRED MUSIC: HANDEL. GIARDINI. KENT.—REV. JOHN BERRIDGE.—LADY HUNTINGDON AT EVERTON.—WONDERFUL EXCITEMENT.—THE MAGDALEN HOSPITAL.—FOOTE. —GARRICK.—THE COUNTESS IN YORKSHIRE.—SANDEMANIAN THEORIES.—ANECDOTES OF FLETCHER AND BERRIDGE.

THE great movement, with which the life of Lady Huntingdon was identified, was every year producing the most marvellous effects. The revival of religion was not confined to any one district, or community; but, like the light, silently affected all, and everywhere secured its glorious triumphs. The labours of Wesley and Whitefield had scattered the fearful darkness which hung over the people, and stimulated many holy men to come forth as champions of the truth. Methodism germinated in the University of Oxford, and for some time grew and gathered strength within the Established Church. The great leaders were her members and ministers, warmly attached to her Articles and Liturgy, and anxious to arouse her to a sense of her important mission to the world. When insuperable obstacles arose, and prevented them labouring within her pale, they chose rather to obey the dictates of their conscience and heart, and preach to the perishing crowds in the fields and highways, than to silence their voice, and calmly settle down, and confine their exertions within the narrow limits of a parish. They, however, accomplished much for the Church of England, and by their influence, aroused her to put forth those efforts which have secured to her the prosperity she enjoys. Before they arose, there was scarcely any real spiritual religion in her midst; but, through them, an impetus was given to many of the clergy, whose numbers gradually increased, and formed a devoted band of Evangelical ministers.

Lady Huntingdon still more extensively furthered the revival of religion in the Established Church. It has been seen how anxiously she gathered around her, and watched over, the godly clergy; how, by her influence, she introduced pious persons to the ministry, by obtaining for them episcopal ordination; and, how she was ever on the alert to aid, by her counsel, wealth, and protection, the zealous ministers of the Church of England. Though her catholicity induced her to welcome every pious minister of Christ, and to assist evangelical dissenters in their labours, her warmest sympathies were towards the Establishment; and secured the services of its clergy to preach in her drawing-rooms, and in the chapels which she afterwards erected in destitute places, until the strong hand of episcopal authority and persecution, forced her to decide, whether she should leave the people to perish uncared for, or shelter herself under the law, expressly provided for dissenters, whose name and principles, however, she refused to adopt. It was about this time, she became acquainted with some of the bright and shining lights of the Church of England.

The Rev. Henry Venn had accepted a curacy in London to serve the Church of St. Matthew, Friday Street, part of the summer, and of West Horsley in Surrey, the remainder of the year. While in London, he became intimate with the Rev. Bryan Broughton, secretary to the "*Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge,*" who had been one of the first Methodists at Oxford, and was a great friend and associate of Whitefield. Through him, and the perusal of Law's "*Serious Call,*" Mr. Venn became deeply impressed with the responsibility of his sacred calling, and the necessity of fervent personal religion. When he was appointed curate of Clapham, he formed an intimate acquaintance with the excellent and benevolent John Thornton Esq., then a young man of genuine piety, who was rapidly rising into public notice. At the house of this gentleman, he had many opportunities of meeting Lady Huntingdon and Whitefield, who frequently preached there, in his presence, to overflowing assemblies. The instructions of this honoured preacher were instrumental in leading him to obtain clear views of divine truth; and shortly after, Mr. Venn invited his friend, Dr. Haweis, from Oxford, to spend some time with him at Clapham. The Doctor had been converted under the powerful ministry of the renowned Mr. Walker, of Truro, and was warmly attached to the moderate opinions of Calvin. He was very zealous in bringing the young men at Oxford to Christ, and met with considerable success. He afterwards became intimate with the Countess, preached in her chapels, was appointed one of her chaplains, and at her death, became one of the devisees of all her chapels.

The conversation of Dr. Haweis had a very beneficial influence on the mind and heart of Mr. Venn. He searched the Scriptures with prayerfulness, discerned more clearly the depravity of the human heart, and warmly appreciated the doctrines of divine grace. A mighty change passed over him; he gave free expression in his sermons to the feelings of his soul; and preached five times a week at his cure and lectureships, besides his private exhortations among his friends. His ministry was greatly blessed; crowds attended his services; and many owned that he was the means of their conversion to God. He adhered to the practice, then so general, of reading his sermons, till he was attacked by a serious illness, which laid him by for several months; after which he threw aside his manuscript, and was almost the first to commence extempore preaching in the Church. His views of religion now became clearer: his conception of the work of Christ more distinct; and his conversation and preaching were pervaded by a more spiritual tone and tendency.

In 1757 Whitefield induced Mr. Venn to accompany him on a preaching excursion into Gloucestershire. Lady Huntingdon had engaged Mr. Madan to itinerate through several parts of the kingdom, and preach the gospel wherever he had an opportunity. He was accompanied through Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, and Buckinghamshire by Mr. Romaine, and visited Warwickshire and Worcestershire, on his way to Bristol to meet Whitefield. Immense crowds attended whenever they preached the glad tidings of salvation in this city. Lady Huntingdon was still at Clifton; and during their stay Messrs. Venn, Madan, and Howell Davies who was supplying the Tabernacle, were hospitably entertained at her Ladyship's residence. The conversation of the Countess was attended with the happiest results to Mr. Venn. His soul expanded, and his thoughts ripened under the genial influence of her character; and his zeal was so stimulated by her example that he resolved to preach boldly the gospel every where, unheeding the smiles or the frowns of man. The Countess frequently wrote to him, and urged him to remain stedfast in the path he had chosen. She pointed out to him the dangers which surrounded his position; the flattery, pride, and self-esteem which the heart welcomed; and the temptations which would certainly assail him. She advised him to preach Christ as the only foundation of the sinner's hope, the sole object of faith, the Prince, the Saviour. "Be bold, be firm, be decisive. Let Christ be the Alpha and Omega of all you advance in your addresses to your fellow men." Her chaplain witnessed the beneficial effect of her instructions, and in a letter to her says, "He owes your Ladyship much, under God; and I believe his whole soul is gratitude to the Divine Author of his mercies, and to you, the honoured instrument in leading him to the fountain of truth."

In the spring of 1758 Lady Huntingdon arrived in London with her family, and soon threw open her house twice every week for the preaching of the gospel. Messrs. Romaine, Venn and Madan principally officiated at her Ladyship's residence. Whitefield was at this time at Bristol, and in a letter to her dated June 17th, 1758, says, "I rejoice in the increase of your Ladyship's spiritual routs. I can guess at the consolation such uncommon scenes must afford to your Ladyship's new-born soul. No wonder you are distressed from other quarters. Indeed my most noble, and ever honoured patroness, thus it must be, Christ's witnesses must be purged at home. Inward domestic trials fit for outward public work. Nature recoils, when constrained to take the cross, and it may be from a near and dear relation's hand; but infinite wisdom knows what is best."

Soon after the Countess arrived in London, she became acquainted with that useful and holy minister, the Rev. John Fletcher, for many years vicar of Madeley in Shropshire. He was a native of Switzerland, and in his youth had an intense passion for a military life. When Providence, in a very remarkable manner, frustrated his hopes and blighted his prospects, he came to England, and in 1752 became the tutor in the family of Thomas Hill, Esq., Tern Hall, near Shrewsbury. He was here led to see the importance of religion, and to gain clear views of the doctrines of salvation, though not without passing through many severe conflicts, and inward trials. He early became connected with Mr. Wesley, who encouraged him to consecrate himself to the service of the sanctuary. For two years he remained undecided; but at length, yielding to the sacred impulses of his heart, and the solicitations of his friends, he was ordained by the Bishop of Bangor in March, 1757. After that service, he preached on the same day for John Wesley, and while in London, diligently proclaimed the gospel in his chapels, both in French and English. He soon became known to the leading persons among the Methodists, who fostered within him the spirit of liberality and zeal, Whitefield spoke of him in very high terms to Lady Huntingdon, and John Wesley introduced him to her shortly after her arrival in London. She was highly delighted with this remarkable man; his piety, and learning, and humility attracted her heart; and the interview soon ripened into a lasting and cordial friendship. Hearing that he preached in French, she mentioned to him the condition of the French prisoners at Tunbridge; and at her request, he went down and proclaimed the gospel to them in their native language. They were deeply affected with his addresses; they requested him to preach to them every Sabbath day; and presented a petition to the Bishop of London to grant him permission to do so. The Bishop, however, rejected their prayer.

When Lady Huntingdon resumed her drawing-room services, which had been discontinued for a time in the latter part of the summer, at London, in November, she invited Mr. Fletcher to preach to the distinguished circle surrounding her. In a letter to Charles Wesley, he records his interview with her Ladyship.

"I carried the enclosed agreeably to its address, and passed three hours with a moderate prodigy—*a pious and humble Countess!* I went with trembling, and in obedience to your orders; but I soon perceived a little of what the disciples felt, when Christ said to them "It is I, be not afraid." She proposed to me something of what you hinted to me in your garden; namely, to celebrate the communion sometimes at her house in a morning, and to preach when occasion offered; in such a manner, however, as not to restrain my liberty, or prevent my assisting you, or preaching to the French refugees; and that only till Providence should clearly point out the path in which I should go. Charity, politeness, and reason accompanied her offer; and I confess, in spite of the resolution which I had almost absolutely formed, to fly the houses of the great, without even the exception of the Countess, I found myself so greatly changed, that I should have accepted on the spot, a proposal which I should have declined from any other mouth, but my engagement with you withheld me; and thanking the Countess, I told her, when I had reflected on her obliging offer, I would do myself the honour of waiting upon her again."

He accepted her Ladyship's invitation, and commenced his ministry at her house with much fear and trembling. His success among the noble was equal to what he had gained in humbler assemblies; his affectionate and fervent manner won the hearts of his hearers; and his earnestness and zeal for their conversion proved that he had but one object before him—the glory of God. During the winter, Lady Huntingdon continued her useful efforts in every possible way, and endeavoured, with the most unwearied diligence, to promote the honour and interests of her divine Master. She steadily pursued her grand designs both at home and abroad, in public and private; and drew into prominence all who had talents and the disposition to serve the Lord. She found a powerful assistant in Mr. Fletcher, who was every way calculated to fan the flame of holy zeal which glowed within her, and to stimulate her to still greater exertion in the service of Christ. He continued actively engaged in London for a few months; he frequently assisted the Wesleys; and preached alternately with them and others, once or twice a week, at the house of Lady Huntingdon, Lady Gertrude Hotham, and Lady Fanny Shirley.

At the commencement of 1759, Lady Huntingdon was actively engaged in her good work at Bath, where a large circle of the nobility surrounded her. She was accompanied thither by Lady Fanny Shirley, and her daughter Lady Selina; and on the 4th of January prevailed upon Mr. Wesley, who was at Bristol, to come to the fashionable city, and preach in her house to the nobility. Her stay here was but short; for early in February, she returned to London, where the people were deeply impressed with a sense of their national guilt. A public humiliation was appointed to be observed on Friday, February 16th, which was rigidly kept at all the places of worship. In the morning, the Countess went to the Tabernacle, to hear Whitefield; and in the evening to the Foundry, where Wesley preached. The chapels were crowded with attentive and prayerful audiences, and great seriousness was every where manifested. At this solemn period, Lady Huntingdon established prayer-meetings at her house, where many wrestled mightily with God, on behalf of the sinful nation. On Wednesday, the 21st, Messrs. Whitefield, C. Wesley, Maxfield, and Venn conducted the services; and on the following Friday, Messrs. Romaine, Wesley, Madan, and Jones fervently prayed for the divine blessing to rest on the land. These interesting meetings were continued sometimes for two or three successive days, and were very useful in stimulating the faith, the zeal, and the spirituality of those who attended them. The Countess greatly enjoyed the fervent spiritual prayers and addresses; and, in her letters of this period, speaks of the effect they produced upon her own soul. She seemed to realize her own unworthiness, and confessed that she had as yet done nothing to manifest her gratitude to Christ. The thought humbled her, and led her to pour out the desire of her heart to God in prayer, that henceforth she might live only to him. "May he increase my faith, animate my heart with a zeal for his glory, enlarge my sphere, and make me more faithful in the sphere in which I move."

The sacrament was frequently administered on these occasions, and addresses given to the communicants. At one time, March 6th, Whitefield presided, and spoke to them, in such strains of simple and touching eloquence, that all were bathed in tears. This mighty master of oratory could penetrate the hearts of his audience, and play upon them, as upon the strings of a harp. He could thrill them with indignation by a feeling of injustice; melt them with compassion by sympathy with woe; and arouse them to experience the noblest and sublimest feelings by the touch of his seraphic fire. The rooms were crowded with nobility to partake of the sacrament, and received an accession to hear the sermon which was preached at the conclusion of the ordinance. These were solemn and soul-quickening seasons; many a gay and thoughtless heart was arrested, and impressed by the truth; and in those who openly professed Christ, the flame of true religion was increased, and exerted a warm and inspiring influence in their respective circles.

Lady Huntingdon was extremely fond of sacred music. Her family was musical, and frequently entertained her guests with singing and playing. She had in early life formed an acquaintance with the celebrated Handel, who was a great favourite with His Majesty, George II.; which, after being suspended for many years, was renewed about this time. He had often conducted private concerts at the residences of the Duke of Rutland, the Earl of Burlington, the Earl of Huntingdon, and of other nobles, who were patrons of music, and his friends. He had for some time been afflicted with blindness; his health was rapidly declining; and his recovery was pronounced hopeless. A great change passed over his mind and heart. He prepared for his approaching dissolution with great calmness, and often spoke of the pleasure he had experienced in setting Scripture to music; and the comfort and satisfaction the sublime passages of the Psalms had afforded him. Lady Huntingdon was attracted to him by his solemn situation, and anxiously sought to ascertain the character of his hope. At his particular request, she visited him, not long before his death. Mr. Madan, who was highly musical, frequently came to see him, and won the confidence and affection of the aged master. The testimony of her Ladyship is very satisfactory. "He is now old, and at the close of his long career; yet he is not dismayed at the prospect before him. Blessed be God for the comfort and consolations which the Gospel affords in every situation, and in every time of our need."* He died April 13th, 1759, and was interred in Westminster Abbey, where a splendid monument by Roubilliac, represents him standing with a scroll in his hand, on which the well- known passage from his "*Messiah*" is inscribed —"I know that my Redeemer liveth."

The Countess was well acquainted with most of the eminent musicians of her times. Giardini, whose wonderful execution on the violin procured for him universal admiration, was a great favourite with her Ladyship. Lady Gertrude Hotham, and Lady Chesterfield, who was esteemed one of the best amateur musicians of her day, gave occasional concerts of sacred music at their residences, where Giardini's performance on the violin, excited great interest, and called forth most rapturous praises. At Lady Huntingdon's request, he composed a few tunes to some of the hymns used in the chapels; and this circumstance led Horace Walpole to remark, "It will be a great acquisition to the Methodist sect to have their hymns set by Giardini." Her Ladyship also became acquainted with Giordini, an Italian composer, who was noted for his thorough mastery of the English style of music. He also composed several hymn tunes, among which is the well-known air called "*Cambridge*." Mr. Kent, whose name is intimately associated with some of the finest specimens of English Anthems, was intimate with the Countess, and the Methodist leaders. His Anthems and hymn-tunes were much used in her Ladyship's chapels, where, it will be seen, the Countess paid considerable attention to the "Psalmody of the Lord's House," and cultivated choral singing, by establishing societies for the practice of music. She greatly assisted the sons of Charles Wesley, who were passionately fond of music; especially Charles, the eldest son, who composed some of his favourite tunes at the request of Lady Huntingdon, and assisted in the formation of her choral societies.

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* Life and Times, &c., Vol. I. p. 229.

It was during the year 1759, Lady Huntingdon became acquainted with the celebrated John Berridge, vicar of Everton, Bedfordshire. He was a man of considerable learning and ability; an accurate scholar, a thorough linguist, a distinguished wit. He possessed a most commanding figure, a deep powerful voice, a correct and clear utterance. His countenance reflected every passion which played on his soul, and gave increased effect to his pointed and sparkling sentences. His addresses were remarkably original; his style, clear and expressive; his figures, often quaint but forcible. His doctrines were thoroughly evangelical, and imparted a richness to his discourses, which indicated the habitual realization of the truths of the gospel. He was a most devoted and laborious minister of Christ, and was the means of doing much good in the service of his Master. His preaching had created a profound sensation in the county; and vast numbers came many miles to hear him. His church became densely crowded; the windows were filled within and without; and even the pulpit was so surrounded with people that the preacher seemed almost lost in the crowd. His hearers were deeply affected with his stirring appeals; and they often uttered loud piercing cries, and were thrown into strong convulsions by the intensity of their feelings. The Rev. Mr. Hicks, vicar of Wrestlingworth, also attracted large crowds of persons, who were affected in a similar manner.

When Lady Huntingdon heard of the remarkable scenes transpiring at Everton, she requested Messrs. Romaine and Madan to repair thither, and investigate the circumstances. They were heartily welcomed by Mr. Berridge and his coadjutor, and accompanied them on their itinerant excursions. They were astonished at what they witnessed, while John Berridge was preaching. Loud cries and ejaculatory prayers burst from the people; many fell down on the ground, some, senseless as if dead, and others in sharp convulsive struggles, as if in the agony of death; and men and women wept aloud, and cried out for mercy. They conversed with those who had been convulsed, and found that their minds had been filled with awe, their consciences aroused and their conviction of their guilt brought home to them. When Romaine and Madan returned to London, John Wesley went to Everton, and noticed the same symptoms attending the ministry of his friend, as had resulted from his early efforts. In a letter to the Countess he says:

"Mr. Berridge appears to be one of the most simple as well as most sensible men of all whom it pleased God to employ in reviving primitive Christianity. I designed to have spent but one night with him; but Mr. Gilbert's mistake, who sent him word I would be at Everton on

Friday, obliged me to stay there another day, or multitudes of people would have been disappointed. They come now twelve or fourteen miles to hear him; and very few come in vain. His word is with power; he speaks as plain and home as John Nelson, but with all the propriety of Mr. Romaine, and the tenderness of Mr. Hervey.

At Colchester, likewise, the word of God has free course, only no house will contain the congregation. On Sunday I was obliged to preach on St. John's-green; the people stood on a smooth sloping ground, sheltered by the walls of an old castle, and behaved as men who felt that God was there."

When Mr. Berridge was called to preach before the university at Cambridge, Lady Huntingdon prevailed upon Mr. Fletcher to go to Everton, and stated her intention of shortly proceeding thither, to witness the astonishing effects which the preaching of the gospel had produced. Accompanied by Messrs. Madan and Venn, she left London, and arrived at the vicarage late in the evening. Her arrival had been made known to the people; and at an early hour on the following morning, an immense concourse of persons flocked to Everton from all parts. The services of the day commenced at seven o'clock, when Mr. Berridge preached to a large and attentive congregation in a spacious field. At eleven, Mr. Hicks read prayers in the church, and Mr. Venn preached from the text, "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." In the afternoon, the crowd was so great that the church could not contain one-fifth of the people; and Mr. Madan preached to the multitudes in the open air. The next day, the number of the people was greatly augmented, the church was crowded to excess, and those who were unable to gain admittance were addressed by Mr. Berridge. The arrival of Lady Huntingdon, and the preaching of the ministers who accompanied her, attracted great attention. The report soon spread round the country; and on the third day more than ten thousand persons assembled to hear the gospel. Mr. Venn preached with remarkable power from the words of Jeremiah, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended; and we are not saved." Crowds came pouring in from all parts during the day; and in the evening, Mr. Berridge addressed them from the words, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Towards the close of the sermon, five persons fell down at once, as if dead; which created an intense excitement in the congregation. Lady Huntingdon was deeply impressed with what she had witnessed; and leaving Mr. Madan at Everton, she returned to London with Messrs. Fletcher, Venn, and Berridge, whom she wished to introduce to the religious circles of the metropolis. During his stay in London, Mr. Berridge preached in some of the city churches, expounded almost every morning and evening at Lady Huntingdon's mansion, and gave occasional lectures at the residences of Lady Gertrude Hotham, and Lady Fanny Shirley.

Shortly after her return to London, the Countess visited the Magdalen Hospital, in the company of the Prince Edward, afterwards Duke of York. A distinguished party was formed at Northumberland House for the purpose of attending an evening service in the chapel. The Prince was accompanied by a select circle of friends, among whom were Lord Huntingdon and Horace Walpole; and was conducted to a state arm-chair, near which Lady Huntingdon, her daughter Lady Selina, and Ladies Fanny Shirley, Hotham, and Chesterfield were seated. The Magdalens, about one hundred and thirty in number, sung a hymn on his entrance; and Dr. Dodd, whose melancholy end, some years after, excited such interest among all classes, preached an eloquent and impressive sermon, which was afterwards published by the express desire of the Prince. After his service, his Royal Highness retired to the parlour, and conversed for a short time with Lady Huntingdon and Lady Chesterfield, on the importance of the institution, and the merits of the sermon. At the time of his departure, some nobleman observed to Lord Hertford, that he thought the sermon savoured a good deal of Methodism. His Lordship was about to reply, when the Prince, who had overheard the remark, turned hastily round and said: "Your Lordship must be fastidious indeed; I thought the discourse excellent, and well adapted to this most useful institution; a sentiment in which Lady Huntingdon, I am most happy to say, cordially coincides with me. Her Ladyship I suspect is much better versed in theology than either of us." The astonished noble bowed, and the Prince withdrew.

Lady Huntingdon continued in London till June 1760, and was greatly affected by a very painful and distressing occurrence, which threw a deep shade over the extensive acquaintance of the Shirley family. She was, however, usefully engaged in her good work, and rarely allowed relative affliction to interfere with her labours for the diffusion of the truth. Her chaplain, George Whitefield, had visited Brighton, and preached in the fields to large assemblies; and was succeeded by those excellent men whom her Ladyship had taken under her patronage and protection. The enemies of Whitefield employed the celebrated actor, Foote, to ridicule him in a most profane and ludicrous manner on the stage of Drury Lane Theatre. His success there, and his pecuniary embarrassments, induced him to write and bring out at the Haymarket Theatre, a ridiculous comedy, called "*The Minor.*" It was intended to take off the Methodists; but it is sufficient to say of it, that Foote and his agents, employed to procure materials for the work from the chapels where Whitefield preached, were so ignorant of the Scriptures, that what they paraded and ridiculed as Whitefield's peculiar language, were portions of the word of God! Mr. Madan addressed a letter to Garrick on the intended representation of this comedy, which had a very extensive circulation; and Lady Huntingdon waited on the Lord Chamberlain to apply for the suppression of the *"Minor."* Her request could not then be granted; but his Lordship assured her that, if he had had any intimation of its evil tendency, previous to its being licensed, the play should never have appeared. The Countess next sought an interview with Garrick, with whom her remonstrance was so far successful, that he promised to use his influence in excluding it for the present, and added that, had he been aware of the offence it was calculated to give, it should never have appeared with his consent. The opposition and ridicule which Whitefield met with, only increased his popularity, and brought thousands of fresh hearers to his chapels. About this period, he frequently preached on behalf of the poor French Protestants in Prussia, who had suffered severely from the cruelty of the Russians in the *Seven Years' War.* Great numbers of the nobility, and the highest officers of the crown went to hear him on these occasions, when he collected upwards of fifteen hundred pounds; for which act of benevolence he received the thanks of his Prussian Majesty, Frederick the Great.

In September 1760, Lady Huntingdon accompanied Mr. Romaine into Yorkshire, on a visit to Mr. and Lady Margaret Ingham at Aberford. Romaine had before visited that part of England, and, as her Ladyship's chaplain, had received the most marked attention. He was much attached to Mr. Ingham, who was a student at Oxford, while he was at the university, though Romaine then had no sympathy with the Methodists. In his excursions into the neighbouring towns, he was often accompanied by Mr. Ingham; he preached wherever he could obtain a church, and occasionally in some of the chapels;

and sometimes attended the meetings of the preachers to regulate the order and discipline of the churches. He was also much attached to Lady Margaret Ingham, who, with her characteristic benevolence and kindness, frequently ministered to his temporal necessities, and added to the scanty stipend he received from the church. Lady Huntingdon's journey to Yorkshire was partly occasioned by the confusion which was then prevailing amongst the societies there, from repeated discussions on church government and discipline. Mr. Ingham had read Sandeman's "*Letters on Theron and Aspasio*," and Glass's "*Testimony to the King of Martyrs*;" and he sent Mr. Batty and Mr. Allen, two of his distinguished preachers, to Scotland, to obtain privately more information respecting their principles. On their return, they adopted the Sandemanian views; and warm debates took place among the societies respecting the nature of a true church. Mr. Allen made the first breach. He expressed his dissatisfaction with the use of the lot for voting-in the members, objected to the choice of elders, and became jealous of the authority which Mr. Ingham exercised over the people. Mr. Ingham remained firm to his principles, and desired the dissentients to withdraw from his societies. Many attempts were made to reconcile the parties and prevent the schism; Lady Huntingdon wrote, and visited Yorkshire with Romaine; Whitefield prayed and wept: but all was in vain. Mr. Ingham never recovered from the severe trial through which he passed on this occasion. Disputes became more frequent and violent; excommunication quickly followed excommunication; the whole body was shattered into a thousand pieces, like a wrecked vessel; and out of more than eighty flourishing churches only thirteen remained true to the great principles they had embraced.

Mr. Venn had left the scene of his labours in London, and had, in 1759, accepted the large and valuable living of Huddersfield, Yorkshire. He found his parish in a very benighted condition, and energetically commenced his labours to enlighten the people. He threw his whole soul into the work. Sometimes he began the service by addressing his hearers, and reminding them they were in the presence of God, and therefore should be devout and prayerful. Often he explained and enforced the Psalms and Lessons for the day, and breathed forth his love and compassion for the souls of his hearers. During the week, he visited the different hamlets in his extensive parish, collected some of the inhabitants in private houses, and addressed them with an earnestness and kindness that moved every heart. Many young persons were among the first-fruits of his ministry; and of these, at least thirteen became useful, and some of them very eminent ministers, chiefly in the Independent denomination. He had been preaching for a short time, with Mr. Fletcher, at Brighton, and returned to Yorkshire with Lady Huntingdon. He was deeply grieved at the fatal results of the dreadful division, which had scattered so many flourishing churches, and caused the enemies of the cross to triumph; and made many efforts to mitigate the evil. Whitefield also, who had recently sent a poor orphan to Georgia, which Lady Huntingdon supported, arrived at Aberford; but all their united efforts to restore peace and order were ineffectual.

Mr. Fletcher could not join the Countess in Yorkshire but frequently wrote to her, and acknowledged how greatly he was indebted to her "for what light he had into the nature of the foundation of Christianity." When at Tern Hall, he had often taken the duty for Mr. Chambers, vicar of Madeley: and as the place was ten miles distant, the groom was ordered to get a horse ready for him every Sunday morning; but so great was his aversion to give any trouble, that if the groom did not happen to wake at the proper time, he prepared the horse with his own hands, and quietly departed. One day Mr. Hill informed him that the living at Dunham, Cheshire, was then vacant, and at his service. The parish was small, the duty light, the income good, about four hundred a year, and the locality healthy and beautiful. Mr. Fletcher thanked his generous patron, and said, "Alas! sir, Dunham will not suit me; there is too much money, and too little labour." "Few clergymen make such objections," replied Mr. Hill: "it is a pity to decline such a living, as I do not know that I can find you another. What shall we do? Would you like Madeley! "That, sir, would be the very place for me." "My object, Mr. Fletcher, is to make you comfortable in your own way. If you prefer Madeley, I shall find no difficulty in persuading Chambers to exchange it for Dunham, which is worth more than twice as much." The exchange was soon effected; and Mr. Fletcher wrote to Lady Huntingdon in Yorkshire an account of his call to Madeley. He enumerates the indications of the providence of God in leading him to the colliers and forgemen of that town. He says:—

"The time is come—the church is vacated—the presentation to it brought, unasked for, into my hands—the difficulty of getting proper testimonials, which I looked upon as insurmountable, vanishes at once—the three clergymen that had opposed me with most bitterness, signed them, and the Bishop of Lichfield countersigns them without the least objection—the lord of the manor, my great opposer, leaves the parish—and the very man, the vicar, who told me I should never preach in that church, now recommends me to it, and tells me he will induct me himself. Are not these indications of the will of God? It seems so to me. What does your Ladyship think of it? I long to go and consult you in Yorkshire, but cannot do it now, without giving up the point on which I want your advice."

Some time before his induction, on his journey to London with his pupils, Fletcher determined to avail himself of the opportunity to call upon John Berridge at Everton. He introduced himself as a new convert, who wished to obtain the benefit of his experience and advice. Berridge perceived by his accent that he was a foreigner, and inquired from what country he came. He replied that he was a Swiss, from the Canton of Berne. "From Berne?" asked Berridge, "then, probably, you can give me some account of a young countryman of yours, one John Fletcher, who has lately preached a few times for the Wesleys, and of whose talents, learning, and piety they both speak in terms of high eulogy. Do you know him?" "Yes, sir, I know him intimately; and did those gentlemen know him as well, they would not speak of him in such terms, for which he is more obliged to their partial friendship than to his own merits." "You surprise me," said Mr. Berridge, "in speaking so coldly of a countryman in whose praise they are so warm." "I have the best reason" he replied, "for speaking of him as I do:—I am John Fletcher." "If you be John Fletcher" exclaimed Berridge, "you must do me the favour of taking my pulpit to-morrow; and when we are better acquainted, without implicitly receiving your statement, or that of your friends, I shall be able to judge for myself." An intimacy soon sprung up between these two distinguished men, the commencement of which has been seen, and which was not interrupted by the violent storms of controversy.

CHAPTER XI. A. D. 1760—1762.

ERECTION OF BRIGHTON CHAPEL.—THE FAST-DAY.—ROMAINE.—LADY HUNTINGDON'S CHARITY.—ANECDOTE OF BERRIDGE.—BISHOP OF LINCOLN.—THE CHAPEL AT OATHALL.—CAPTAIN SCOTT.—ANECDOTE OF OLD ABRAHAM.—LADY HUNTINGDON IN YORKSHIRE.—DR. CONYERS.—ARCHBISHOP OF YORK.—LADY HUNTINGDON AT BRIGHTON.—ROMAINE, FLETCHER, BERRIDGE.—DEATH OF GRIFFITH JONES, AND MR. JONES OF ST. SAVIOUR'S CHURCH.

THE attention of Lady Huntingdon was now given to the erection of Chapels in various localities, where places of worship were required. The prejudice of the clergy against her zealous efforts to bring the perishing to Christ, had almost completely shut up the churches to her ministers; and if she persevered in her work, she was reduced to the alternative of either confining her labours to open air services, when the weather permitted, or establishing commodious chapels, which would afford a home to those who had been impressed with the truth, and desired to become better acquainted with the doctrines of the gospel. She chose the latter mode of procedure, and commenced her efforts at Brighton. The preaching of Whitefield, Venn, Romaine, and Fletcher, had been greatly blessed to the people. Many had been convinced of their sins, and reformed in their lives; the number of hearers had steadily increased; and a small Christian Society had been formed among them, whose members frequently met for prayer, praise, and reading the Scriptures. The promising state of affairs in this town, induced Lady Huntingdon to erect a small but neat chapel contiguous to her house, on the site of the present noble building in North Street. She defrayed the expense of it, either wholly or in part, by the sale of her jewels to the amount of *Six hundred and ninty-eight pounds, fifteen shillings.*

The chapel was opened in the summer of 1761 by the Rev. Martin Madan, and was for some time solely supplied by clergymen of the Church of England. Messrs. Romaine, Berridge, Venn and Fletcher, successively took the charge of the congregation, and preached with great acceptance to the people. The Countess had a very warm attachment to the Liturgy, which then formed a distinguishing feature of all her chapels; and she always considered herself, her ministers, and congregations, members of the Established Church. The labours of the apostolic men who assisted her, soon raised a storm of persecution against them; their doctrines were offensive to the worldly-minded; their zeal, to the slothful; and their stirring addresses, to those who were dead in trespasses and sins. Many attempts were made to intimidate them, and prevent them preaching the gospel; but they continued their useful efforts in the most undaunted manner, regardless of the torrents of reproach which were continually dashing against them. The Great Head of the Church protected his servants, and cheered them onward in their career, by making them the instruments of converting many souls, and establishing them in the faith.

Whitefield was prevented, by a serious indisposition, being at Brighton on this joyful occasion. He had been zealously employed all the winter in London, at his own chapels, and at Lady Huntingdon's house. On the day appointed for a general fast, February 13th, 1761, he preached twice at the Tabernacle, and once at Tottenham Court Chapel, and collected nearly six hundred pounds for the relief of the German Protestants, and the sufferers by a dreadful fire at Boston. The attendance of the nobility was very large. Lady Huntingdon prevailed upon many, who otherwise never would have entered the place, to hear her gifted chaplain. Lady Chesterfield, Lady Gertrude Hotham, and Lady Fanny Shirley, also took large parties of the nobility with them, who expressed themselves highly delighted with his discourses. Lord Halifax, and Lord Holderness, then Secretary of State, the personal friends of the Countess, were present; also the Duke of Grafton, so vehemently attacked in the eloquent *"Letters"* of *"Junius;"* and Charles Fox and William Pitt, the two greatest men of their day. Few places could boast of such a brilliant assemblage of men, who were distinguished for genius, wisdom or oratorical powers, as was convened in these humble chapels to listen to the genuine eloquence of Whitefield. The health of this gifted preacher, however, was greatly shattered by repeated colds, which even threatened his life; and during the whole of this year, and the greater part of the next, he was obliged to remain quiet and to preach only occasionally.

Lady Huntingdon was now less dependent than hitherto upon her first chaplain, to carry on the great work she had commenced. God had been pleased to raise up many zealous labourers in his vineyard, who sympathized with her in her plans, and warmly co-operated with her in her efforts. Romaine was her second chaplain, and was indefatigable in carrying out her intentions. He had itinerated for her through several parts of England, preached with much acceptance to her drawing-room assemblies, and was ever her adviser and coadjutor. They both harmoniously strove to carry out the same grand object; the one by her influence and wealth, the other by his zeal and diligence. His services were thoroughly, disinterestedly given, and were rendered without the least expectation of any remuneration; for, to his honor be it said, all he would receive from her Ladyship barely paid his journeys and expenses. Neither of her chaplains were enriched, in a pecuniary point of view, by the services they rendered Lady Huntingdon. They discerned too clearly their reward from their heavenly Master to be eager for the rewards of earth; and they witnessed with pleasure the sums, which might have been lavished on them, employed for the noblest purposes. The Countess was liberal, even to excess. All she possessed she devoted to the service of Christ; and though she knew that it was a duty to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, she employed her wealth chiefly to bring the gospel to those who were perishing in their sins. One of her ministers, the Rev. John Eyre, relates that he once conversed with her respecting the wants of a family who appeared to be in great distress. Lady Huntingdon said, "I can do for them but very little. I am obliged to be a spectator of miseries which I pity, but cannot relieve. For when I gave myself up to the Lord, I likewise devoted to him all my fortune; with this reserve, that I would take with a sparing hand what might be necessary for my food and raiment, and for the support of my children, should they live to be reduced. I was led to this from a consideration, that there were many benevolent persons who had no religion, who would feel for the temporal miseries of others, and help them; but few, even among professors, who had a proper concern for the awful condition of ignorant and perishing souls. What, therefore, I can save, for a while, out of my own necessaries, I will give them; but more I dare not take without being guilty of sacrilege."

The Rev. John Berridge was a particular favourite with her Ladyship. Her conversation and correspondence with him were greatly blessed to him; and were the means of leading him to obtain clearer views of salvation, and of stimulating him to preach the gospel with greater boldness and power. He was indefatigable in his labours; and for twenty-four years he continued to ride nearly one hundred miles, and preach a dozen sermons every week. He was also exceedingly liberal, and employed in the service of Christ all the income arising from his vicarage and fellowship.

At home, his house and stables were thrown open to his hearers who came from a distance; and abroad, houses and barns were rented, lay-preachers supplied, and their travelling expenses paid out of his own purse. His ear was ever attentive to the tale of woe, his eye keen to detect misery, his heart ready to sympathize, and his hand open to relieve. He was a man of great boldness and power, and was rarely intimidated. He says:—

"Soon after I began to preach the gospel at Everton the churches in the neighbourhood were deserted, and mine so over crowded, that the squire, who 'did not like strangers,' he said, 'and hated to be incommoded,' joined with the offended parsons, and soon after, a complaint having been made against me, I was summoned before the Bishop. 'Well, Berridge,' said his Lordship, 'did I institute you to Eaton or Potten? Why do you go preaching out of your own parish?' 'My Lord,' said I, 'I make no claims to the living of those parishes; 'tis true, I was once at Eaton, and finding a few poor people assembled, I admonished them to repent of their sins, and to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, for the salvation of their souls. At that very moment, my Lord, there were five or six clergymen out of their own parishes, and enjoying themselves on the Eaton bowling-green.' 'I tell you,' retorted his Lordship, 'that if you continue preaching where you have no right, you will very likely be sent to Huntingdon goal.' 'I have no more regard, my Lord, for a goal than other folks,' rejoined I; 'but I had rather go there with a good conscience, than be at liberty without one.' His Lordship looked very hard at me,' 'Poor fellow!' said he, 'you are beside yourself, and in a few months you will be either better or worse.' 'Then, my Lord,' said I, 'you may make yourself quite happy in this business; for if I should be better, you suppose I shall desist of my own accord; and if worse, you need not send me to Huntingdon goal, for I shall be better accommodated in Bedlam.' His Lordship then pathetically entreated me, as one who had been and wished to continue my friend, not to embitter the remaining portion of his days by any squabbles with my brother clergymen, but to go home to my parish, and stated that so long as I kept within it, I should be at liberty to do what I liked there. 'As to your conscience,' said his Lordship, 'you know that preaching out of your parish is contrary to the canons of the Church.' 'There is one canon, my Lord,' said I, 'which I dare not disobey, and that says, Go, preach the Gospel to *every creature.*' "

Though the Bishop was greatly displeased, Berridge gave him little concern about the affair, and the subject soon after dropped. An old friend, who was very intimate with William Pitt, urged that distinguished statesman to apply to the Bishop on behalf of Berridge, who was thus enabled to triumph over his enemies. Though the vicar of Everton attributed his success to the influence of Pitt, it is evident that Lady Huntingdon aided in securing the happy result. The Lord Chancellor Henley, who had promoted the Bishop to the see of Lincoln, was a personal friend of her Ladyship, who applied to him to use his influence with the learned prelate on behalf of Berridge. To this Mr. Grimshaw alludes in a letter, when he says, "May the Lord eternally bless that dear, good, honourable Lady Huntingdon, who would defend a persecuted minister of Christ to the last gown on her back, and the last shilling in her pocket!"

Another place of worship was opened by the Countess during the year 1761. Among the numbers, attracted by the fame of the preaching at her Ladyship's chapel at Brighton, were many farmers and country people from the wilds of Sussex. Some of them were deeply impressed with the truth, and entreated the Countess to afford them the opportunity of hearing the same glorious doctrines nearer home. She was as willing to spread the joyful sound of salvation as they could be to hear it, and only wished to find a suitable place in which to erect the standard of the Cross. Providence now seemed to point out the way. An old gentleman, named Warden, a well-known justice of the peace for the county of Sussex, then occupied the mansion of Oathall, near Cuckfield, which had formerly belonged to the Shirley family. Hearing of her desire to introduce the gospel into the wilds of Sussex, he waited on her Ladyship, and offered to let his house for a term of years for the very purpose she meditated. The agreement was speedily drawn up; and the Countess took possession of the premises, fitted up the large hall for a chapel, and furnished the upper rooms for her own residence, and the accommodation of the ministers whom she invited thither. Here her zealous coadjutors preached the gospel, with great success, among a people who loved the simple truths of the Bible. The labours of the Rev. W. Romaine were particularly crowned with success. He wrote to Lady Huntingdon, "Such a time I scarce ever knew as we have had at Oathall. I met the society twice, and had spoken with them one by one for two Sundays before we had the sacrament; we were about one hundred communicants fed at the Lord's table. It was a feast indeed; he not only made us welcome to the bread and cup of salvation, but also vouchsafed his divine presence, and gave us blessed foretastes of the marriage supper. Surely Oathall is a highly favoured place, where the Lord himself delighteth to dwell."

During the stay of this eminent minister at Oathall, he became instrumental in the conversion of Captain Scott, afterwards a noted preacher of the gospel. The Captain had seen distinguished service in Germany, and was deeply impressed with the danger to which his profession exposed him. He had experienced many seasons of religious anxiety, and had often formed resolutions to live a holy life. These he had repeatedly endeavoured to carry out; but all his works could not quiet his conscience, and satisfy his heart. The Captain happened to be quartered with his regiment in the neighbourhood of Oathall; and when on a shooting excursion, he was driven by a storm to seek shelter at the house of a farmer, with whom some of the horses of the regiment were at grass, where he was kindly and hospitably entertained. The farmer being a pious man, and Scott happening to be at the time in what he termed a "*religious mood*" the conversation took a serious turn, and resulted in an importunate invitation by the farmer for him to hear the Rev. W. Romaine, whom he represented as a very extraordinary man, and now preaching for Lady Huntingdon at the Hall. Captain Scott accepted the invitation, and accordingly repaired thither on the following Sunday. He was there struck with the solemnity which pervaded the congregation, and the impressive manner in which the service was conducted. Romaine preached from our Lord's words, "I am the way." The message was exactly suited to the case of the soldier; and God, who in his good providence had brought him to hear it, by the power of his grace made it effectual to the salvation of his soul. From that time commenced the happy change, for which hundreds, who have been called under his ministry, have had reason to bless God. He retained his military profession, though his altered conduct exposed him to many annoyances in the army; as he was marching through Leicester with his regiment, he opened his commission as a minister of the Lord Jesus; and wherever he was stationed, he boldly preached the gospel in his regimentals. Whitefield invited him to his London pulpits, "to bring his artillery to Tabernacle rampart, and try what execution he can do here." Romaine greatly encouraged him to persevere in his course, and advised him to accept the invitation of Whitefield. A tremendous storm of thunder and lightning burst over him as he entered London; which he regarded as an indication of the divine displeasure. He, however, came to the Tabernacle, where an immense crowd was assembled to hear the *red-coated preacher.* The sight of the vast audience completely unnerved him; his utterance failed; his tears flowed fast; and it was some time before he could recover himself. At length he became composed and preached with power and acceptance, and for twenty years he was one of the most popular supplies at the chapel. After a while, he sold his commission, quitted the service of the King for that of Christ, and became a burning and a shining light.

Another remarkable first-fruit, gathered at Oathall by her Ladyship's ministers, was an old man called Abraham. He had been for fifty years a soldier, and, after his discharge, settled with his wife near Oathall. He became serious, and sought after the truth; but not being satisfied with what he heard at his church, he went round to the neighbouring churches, and still failed to meet with what he desired. He thus roamed about till her Ladyship's chapel was opened at the Hall; and though he was greatly prejudiced against the Methodists, he resolved to go once and hear. He was then one hundred years old; but he was still hearty, and his faculties were nearly unimpaired. Mr. Venn was at that time with the Countess, and preached at the chapel on the morning when old Abraham attended. The truth came to his mind with a power and conviction the aged man had never before experienced. He listened with the deepest attention and delight, and could scarcely restrain his joy; and as soon as the service was ended, he laid his hand on the shoulder of a neighbour, who was at his side, and said, "Ah, neighbour, this is the very truth of God's word, which I have been seeking for, and never heard it so plain before. Here will I abide." From that time he was most regular in his attendance on the ministry of the different clergymen who preached there, and daily grew in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. His age, and snow-white head made him a conspicuous personage, and his conversation rendered him very precious to all the serious persons around.

Lady Huntingdon took a deep interest in this aged disciple, and frequently visited his cottage. One day when she was talking with him, he gave her an account of some of his little trials. "Oh, my Lady," he said, "'tis my grief that my old partner is a little too apt to run ahead sometimes; but I will tell ye what happened the other day. When that remarkable darkness and tempest came over us here, she was terribly frightened, and thought it was the day of judgment, and in she ran with an old gossip of hers, who was of her mind and against me, and down they fell upon their knees upon the floor, and said, 'Abraham, come and pray for us.' So said I, 'What is the matter, dame?' 'O' she said, 'it is the day of judgment! it is the day of judgment! Ar'n't you afraid?' 'Afraid! no' said I; 'what should I be afraid of? If it is the day of judgment, then I shall see Christ Jesus, my Lord, and that will be a joyful sight.' So, my Lady, I began to sing a hymn. By and bye the storm was over, and then they both forgot the fright it had put them in." Old Abraham died calmly and triumphant, in the one hundred and sixth year of his age, and was gathered by his Saviour as a shock of corn fully ripe.

The glorious results, which these efforts produced, greatly stimulated Lady Huntingdon in her work of faith and labour of love. Every moment of her time was devoted to Christ. The winter was spent in corresponding with her numerous friends, arranging circuits for itinerating in the summer, and gathering the nobility in London, Bath or Clifton to hear the gospel in her drawing-rooms. Charles Wesley generally officiated as her chaplain when she was at Bath or Clifton, and preached at her residence. She was constantly increasing the number of her ministerial friends, and found employment for them all in the vineyard of her Master. She did not, however, neglect her own soul in her concern for the souls of others. Her piety was always nourished by an earnest, constant communion with Christ; her love grew warmer with her increasing experience of the love of God; her faith became stronger as her views of truth expanded and ripened; and her zeal was stimulated to fresh acts of benevolence by the success which had attended her efforts, and the insight she had gained of the ignorance and sinfulness of the perishing world.

In the summer of 1762 Lady Huntingdon paid another visit to Yorkshire, where she became interested in the labours of the Rev. Dr. Conyers, afterwards brother-in-law to Mr. Thornton, of Clapham, at Helmsley in the North Riding. He had been for some years a most amiable clergyman, and had entered on the discharge of his sacred duties with great zeal and energy. He regularly visited his parish, conversed with his parishioners, catechised the children, gathered the young men around him, and exhorted all to lead moral and peaceful lives. His views of religion, however, were very different from what the gospel unfolds to us; he was easy, good-natured, and social; but a stranger to a clear comprehension of that salvation, which alone can rescue a guilty world. One day he was struck with the apostle's expression "*The unsearchable riches of Christ*;" and remarked that he had never found anything unsearchable in him, that everything seemed very simple, and that he discerned no mystery in the gospel. The contrast between his state, and the apostle's sentiment, forcibly impressed his mind; and after many painful exercises, he was led to see the nature of Christ's mediatorial work. The discovery filled him with intense joy. He says, "I went upstairs and down again, backwards and forwards in my room, clapping my hands for joy, and crying out, 'I have found him! I have found him! I have found him whom my soul loveth;' and for a little time, as the Apostle said, whether in the body, or out of it, I could hardly tell.' With great candour, he informed his hearers of the important change which had taken place in his mind and heart, and redoubled his efforts to promote the welfare of his charge. He preached with greater fluency and power than previously, and prominently set forth those doctrines which had lately been brought to his attention. He soon experienced the opposition, which all godly ministers were then exposed to. His former friends treated him with coldness and neglect, and many openly heaped upon him contumely and scorn. He, however, meekly bore their reproaches; and God gave him great success in his labours. His converts rapidly increased, whom he divided into distinct classes, men and woman, the married and the unmarried by themselves; and each day he preached in some part of his parish, and conversed with the people.

He was once called upon to preach a sermon before the clergy at a visitation of the Archbishop of York. His evangelical principles were well known; and the neighbouring clergy declared that if he dared to proclaim his Methodism in the presence of his Grace, his gown would soon be taken from him. He, undaunted, preached with his usual fervour, and gave free expression to the grand truths of the gospel; which excited many frowns and fears in his hearers. After the service, he happened to be standing in the street conversing with some of his parishioners, when the Archbishop came up to him, and said, "Well, Conyers, you have given us a fine sermon!" "I am glad" said the Doctor, "it meets with the approbation of your Grace." "Approbation! approbation!" replied the Archbishop, "if you go on preaching such stuff, you will drive all your parish mad! Were you to inculcate the morality of Socrates, it would do more good than canting about the new birth." His Grace quickly turned round, and departed, without waiting for any reply. The Countess wrote to Dr. Conyers to meet her at Knaresborough; but he was unable to do so, and sent her Ladyship a beautiful letter excusing and regretting her absence.

Lady Huntingdon attended the nineteenth Conference of Methodists, held at Leeds, August 9th, 1762, when Messrs. Romaine, Madan, Venn, Whitefield, and the Wesleys were present. Whitefield proceeded to Scotland, and Lady Huntingdon to Knaresborough, where she remained some time, and held frequent meetings of all the evangelical clergymen in Yorkshire with the view of stimulating them to more active exertions in diffusing the light of salvation into the benighted districts of the north. She afterwards went to Harrowgate, where Romaine preached several times, and thence to Kippax and Aberford, where she remained for several weeks actively engaged in promoting the spread of the gospel.

Lady Huntingdon went from Yorkshire to Brighton to see after her infant church in that town. She was extremely anxious for its prosperity, and endeavoured to obtain the services of eminent clergymen of the Church of England to sustain the interest which had been awakened. She personally arranged all the supplies, and with great wisdom tried to select those preachers whose ministrations would form a pleasing variety. Mr. Romaine repaired from Harrowgate to Brighton, and remained there till Michaelmas, where his efforts were very successful in counteracting the influence of some, who were very clamorous for the doctrine of perfection, which had created very serious divisions among Wesley's societies in London; and who threatened to disturb the peace and prosperity of her Ladyship's congregation at Brighton. On his return to London, Mr. Madan went down to supply the chapel; and Romaine promised to undertake the duty at the Lock Hospital, and set Dr. Haweis at liberty to preach for her Ladyship. The preaching of Mr. Madan was attractive and useful; he drew large crowds to the chapel, and succeeded in healing the wounds which the cry of perfection had made in the hearts of the people. He spent ten weeks at Brighton, and left amid the deep regrets of the congregation.

Lady Huntingdon had written to Mr. Fletcher, and invited him to pay her a visit in the summer; but he was so peculiarly situated at Madeley that he was obliged to decline the invitation. He stood alone in his neighbourhood; no clergyman would condescend to hold any intercourse with him, because of his principles; and he was so closely tied to his parish that, since his induction, he had not preached out of his church. He, however, was enabled to leave for a short time, and supplied the place of Mr. Madan at Brighton for some weeks, till Howell Davis could relieve him. The Countess, however, could not now prevail upon John Berridge to leave his stated labours, and supply her chapel. She wrote to him an urgent request for his services; and he sent her the following reply, which is very characteristic of the man. It is dated Everton, November 16th, 1762.

"I cannot see my way to Brighthelmstone; and I ought to see it for myself, not another for me. Was any good done when I was there? It was God's doing; all the glory be to him. This shows I did not then go without my Master, but it is no proof of a second call. Many single calls have I had to villages, when some good was done, but no further call. I am not well able to ride so long a journey, and my heart is utterly set against wheel-carriages in these roads. Indeed, I see not my call; I cannot think of the journey; and, therefore, pray your Ladyship to think no more of it. I write thus plainly, not out of forwardness, I trust, but to save your Ladyship the trouble of sending a second request, and myself the pain of returning a second denial. You threaten me, Madam, like a Pope, not like a mother in Israel, when you declare roundly that God will scourge me, if I do not come; but I know your Ladyship's good meaning, and this menace was not despised. It made me slow in resolving, and of course slow in writing; it made me also attend to the state of my own mind during its deliberation, which was as follows:—Whilst I was looking towards the sea, partly drawn thither with the hope of doing good, and partly driven by your *Vatican Bull*, I found nothing but thorns in my way; and now, while I am sending a peremptory denial, I feel no check or reproof within, which I generally do when I am not willing to go about my Master's business."

The Countess was this year deprived of two valuable assistants by death. The Rev. Griffith Jones, rector of Llanddowror, had been one of her earliest ministers, and had excited a warm interest in her heart towards the Welsh people. His death was peaceful and triumphant. The Rev. Mr Jones of St. Saviour's Church, London, had been introduced to her Ladyship, when he was under deep religious concern; and her conversation and friendship were useful in consoling him in his distress, and strengthened his faith in Christ. He was a gifted preacher, a fine scholar, and possessed a remarkably sweet and placid disposition. He had often preached at her Ladyship's residence in London; and Lady Huntingdon intended to have secured his services at Brighton and Oathall, if death had not snatched him from this world, in the thirty-third year of his age. He had been long the subject of affliction, and his life often despaired of; but his trials were sent to prepare him for that bright and pure land, where sorrows and death are unknown. The mind of the Countess was deeply affected by the loss she had sustained, as she had fondly hoped to employ these two clergymen in her chapels; but her faith rose to God; and confiding in his care and wisdom, she pursued her career with redoubled energy, and felt assured that he would raise up men to preach the gospel, if she humbly trusted to his guidance, and aimed at the promotion of his glory.

CHAPTER XII. A.D. 1763—1764.

LADY HUNTINGDON AT BRIGHTON.—ROMAINE; HIS EARLY BREAKFASTS.—DR. CONYERS.—THE GREEK BISHOP.—DEATH OF GRIMSHAW.—LADY SELINA HASTINGS; HER DEATH.—SORROW OF THE COUNTESS.—SYMPATHY OF FRIENDS.—LETTER OF BERRIDGE.—TUNBRIDGE WELLS; ITS CONDITION; HER MINISTERS PREACH THERE.—MRS. CARTERET.—MRS. CAVENDISH.—REV. WALTER SHIRLEY.—PERSECUTION OF ROMAINE.—LAW-SUITS.—THE TRIUMPH OF THE GOSPEL.—JOY OF THE COUNTESS.

Lady Huntingdon continued her residence at Brighton during the greater part of 1763, and watched over the interests of her congregation with the greatest assiduity. Her house was the abode of prayer and praise; her social circle was blessed with the constant presence of some devoted minister of Christ: and the little company enjoyed that divine happiness which Jesus communicates to those who love and serve him sincerely. The attendance at the chapel was most encouraging, and many signs of good were appearing among the people. The labours of her zealous clergymen had a very beneficial influence on the prosperity of the community; the threatening symptoms passed away, and the utmost love and unanimity prevailed. The zeal of the Countess inspired all around her with enthusiastic energy; her faith strengthened the weak, her love warmed the cold, her activity put the slothful to the blush; and her self-denying generosity caused even avarice to loosen its grasp, and testify to the power of her example. The number of her faithful labourers, however, was so limited, and their engagements were so various, that she experienced some difficulty in securing a regular supply of clergymen; and this occasioned her to enter into a voluminous correspondence with pious ministers, in different parts of the country, which alone was sufficient to occupy the attention of a person of ordinary ability. At this time, too, there was a considerable excitement in London among those who had hitherto co-operated with her.

Dr. Haweis was associated with Mr. Madan in the chaplaincy of the Lock Hospital; and when the Broadway chapel, Westminster, became vacant, by the death of Mr. Briant, he proposed to rent it of the widow, and applied to the Dean of Westminster for a license. This was refused him; and Romaine, who possessed a license to preach in the diocese of London, opened the chapel, and speedily gathered a large congregation. Before, however, a year had elapsed, he was compelled to vacate the pulpit, through fear of incurring the penalties of the Spiritual Court. Lord Dartmouth, his stedfast friend, offered him a living in the country; and Whitefield, who was still in very delicate health, and preparing for a voyage to America, invited him to settle at a great church in Philadelphia, and on his refusal, pressed the invitation with Dr. Haweis. These two devoted men however, resolved to stay in their own land, and preach the gospel wherever they could obtain a church. Romaine greatly desired to assist Lady Huntingdon at Brighton, and intended to have succeeded Howell Davies; but as Mr. Madan was denied access to his pulpit, and Dr. Haweis was without a license, he was unable to leave London. He was doing a great work in the metropolis. Ever since his marriage in 1755, he had resided at a pleasant retreat, in Walnut-tree Walk, Lambeth, where he was in the habit of inviting young clergymen to his early breakfasts; many of whom have spoken with deep gratitude of the instruction and encouragement they have received from him. He was, however, so convinced of the importance of the work Lady Huntingdon was engaged in, that he wrote to her from Lambeth, February 5th, 1763; and after explaining the cause of his inability to come and assist her then, says, "It would be a great blessing if the Head of the Church should have more places open to sound his fame and praise in your neighbourhood; and if he has such a gracious design, there shall not be wanting heralds to proclaim his style and titles. Get churches, and you won't want ministers. For my part, I am quite fixed, and every day more so, in my present work. I am called to it, and commanded therein to abide with God."

Lady Huntingdon was now carrying on a correspondence with Dr. Conyers; and aware of the feeble state of his health, she invited him to Brighton that he might have the benefit of the sea-air and enlarge the sphere of his usefulness. The Doctor was an exceedingly nervous man. He seldom preached out of his own pulpit; even the sight of a stranger often threw him into a state of excitement; and it was very rarely his friends could induce him to conduct family worship at their homes. He frequently said to Mr. Thornton, "If ever you expect any blessing under my ministry, I beg you will not bring so many black coats with you." He immediately declined her Ladyship's invitation; and assigned as a reason, that the duties of his parish, which was very extensive, demanded all his time and strength, and that he was afraid to venture where so many eloquent ministers of Christ had so successfully proclaimed his salvation.

Lady Huntingdon's visit to the metropolis was very short; for she was summoned to Brighton by the serious illness of one of her daughters. While she was in London, a person named Erasmus, a Greek Bishop, who stated that his see was Arcadia in Crete, attempted to ingratiate himself into the favor of the Countess. The attempt, however was unsuccessful; as she suspected he was an impostor. "There is something singular in this man" she says, "and it strikes me that he is not altogether what he appears or pretends to be. Mr. Romaine, Mr. Madan, and others have strong doubts of the reality of his office." Mr. Wesley, however, held a different opinion; and contrary to the advice of his brother Charles, and some of his best friends, he obtained for some of his lay-preachers ordination from the bishop; though the opposition was so strong against them, that they never exercised their new functions. Wesley was accused of a breach of the oath of supremacy in thus availing himself of the powers of a foreign prelate, and was also charged with having pressed the bishop to consecrate him a bishop, that he might have power to ordain whom he pleased. The former charge was denied by Mr. T. Olivers; the latter was vindicated on the ground that Wesley and his followers manifestly had the inward call, and desired the outward call also; which, being refused them by English Bishops, justified them in seeking it wherever they pleased.

While in London, Lady Huntingdon had the misfortune to lose her valuable and faithful friend, the laborious and apostolic Grimshaw. In the early part of 1763 Haworth was visited by a violent putrid fever, which carried off a great number of the inhabitants. He was not the man to shrink, through fear, from the calls of duty; though he had a strange presentiment that some one of his family would be among its victims. He exhorted his household to be prepared for the event; and committing himself to the care of his Master, he went among the sick and the dying, that he might point the soul to Christ before it took its flight into the future world. He caught the infection; and knowing that his days here were numbered, he longed for and welcomed the speedy approach of death. Many of his friends came to visit him, and to cheer him in his passage through the valley of the shadow of death. Mr. Ingham was by his bedside for a long time, and was then relieved by Mr. Venn. His faith was strong, and his hope buoyant when Mr. Ingham came to him, Grimshaw said, "My last enemy is come! the signs of death are upon me; but I am not afraid. No! No! Blessed be God, my hope is sure, and I am in his hands." His friends prayed that he might be restored, and his useful life long spared; and the dying man only wished for life, because, he said, "if the Lord should raise me up, I think I could do no more for his glory than I have hitherto done. Alas! what have my wretched services been?" Yet he was perfectly resigned to the will of God, He said, "I harbour no desire of life; my time is come; I am entirely resigned to God; Thy will be done." Mr. Ingham mentioned that he had received a letter from Lady Huntingdon, in which she expressed her sympathy and consolation; and at the mention of her name, Mr. Grimshaw lifted up his hands to heaven, and said, "Tell her Ladyship, that dear elect woman, that I thank her from the bottom of my heart for all her kindnesses to me during the years that I have known her. With my dying breath, I implore every blessing, temporal and spiritual, to rest upon her. May the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, bless her,—bless her in body, soul, and spirit. I can never repay the spiritual good I have reaped at her hands. O that she may be eminently useful in her day and generation." He lingered a short time; and exclaiming, "Here goes an unprofitable servant;" he died, April 7th, 1763, in the fifty-fifth year of his age.

On the return of the Countess to Brighton, she immediately proceeded to Oathall, where the Lord was pleased to visit her with a very severe and affecting calamity, by removing from her an affectionate daughter. Lady Selina Hastings was the youngest of seven children, and was born December 3rd, 1737. Her education had been carefully superintended by her mother, who early trained her in the ways of religion, as well as fostered those graces and accomplishments which were indispensable to her high station. Her disposition was naturally amiable; and she studied to repay the tenderness of her mother with an affection that beautifully ripened with her increasing age. She was her comfort in sorrow, her joy in health, and her helper in many of her benevolent enterprises. She cultivated the religion of the heart; and neither the attractions of youth, and fortune, nor the dazzling splendour of high life, could divert her from an habitual intercourse with the Most High. She was most constant in her attention and love to her mother, and was rarely absent from her. She had made her appearance at Court, and was one of the six Earls' daughters who assisted the Princess Augusta in supporting the train of Queen Charlotte at her coronation, in September 1761: and was to have been married, with the consent of her mother and the Earl, to her relative Colonel George Hastings. Lady Selina manifested the reality of her religion by her conduct in life. It gave a spiritual and heavenly tone to her mind, and a sweetness to her disposition; and closed a useful career with a bright and happy prospect. During her trying illness, she was greatly supported by the rich promises of the gospel; her mind was peaceful and happy; her faith was firmly fixed on her Saviour; a holy smile played on her features; and if ever a cloud cast its shadow over them, and disturbed the tranquility of her soul, it was the thought of leaving her widowed mother behind her in the troublous scenes of life, without her presence to soften her trials, and alleviate her cares. Lady Huntingdon has left the following touching account of the illness and death of her beloved daughter:

"It pleased our dear God and only Saviour to take from me May 12th, 1763, at three-quarters after four in the morning, my dearest, my altogether lovely child and daughter, Lady Selina Hastings, the desire of my eyes, and continual pleasure of my heart. On the 26th of April, she was taken ill of a fever, which lasted obstinate till the seventeenth day from the time it began. On her going to bed, she said she should never rise from it more; and from all she said to me through her illness, it was evident that she continued satisfied she could not live. She said she did not begin to think about death then, and that she had no desire to live; 'therefore, my dear mother, why not now? The Lord can make me ready for himself in a moment; and if I live longer, I may not be better prepared; I am a poor creature; I can do nothing myself; I only hope you will be supported.' She often desired me to pray by her, and with great earnestness accompanied me; and at one time she called me and said, '*My dearest mother, come and lie down by me, and let my heart be laid close to yours, and then I shall get rest.*' She often called on the Lord Jesus to have mercy on her, and complained of her impatience; though none ever heard a complaint pass her lips, notwithstanding her sufferings were so great. I said she was blessed with patience; she replied, 'Oh, no!' with some tears. During the last four days, these sentences at times fell from her:—'Jesus, teach me! Jesus, wash me, cleanse me, and purify me!' Lying quiet, she said two angels were beckoning her, and she must go, but could not get up the ladder. Another time she said, 'I am as happy as my heart can desire to be.' The day before her death, I came to her, and asked her if she knew me? 'My *dearest* mother!' I then asked if her heart was happy? She replied, 'I now well understand you;' and raising her head from the pillow, added, 'I am *happy, very, very* happy!' and then put out her lips to kiss me. She gave directions to her servant, Catharine Spooner, about the disposal of some rings, observing that she 'mentioned it to her lest it should shock her dear mother to tell her.' She often said, 'to be resigned to God's will was all,' and that she had 'no hope of salvation but in the mercy of Jesus Christ alone.' Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord."

To resign into the arms of death such an affectionate and dutiful daughter, was a severe trial to Lady Huntingdon; but the conviction that it was ordered by that Being, who is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind, silenced every rising murmur. The choicest flowers, which breathe out the richest perfumes, often droop and perish most quickly; and the loveliest members of the family circle are frequently first gathered to their final home. The afflicted mother best knew the worth of her child, and, therefore, most keenly felt the loss she had sustained. Her faith, however, realized the preciousness of the promise, "As thy day, thy strength shall be." She knew that God was doing all things well; she repressed every murmuring thought, yielded implicit submission to the divine will, humbled herself under the bereaving stroke; and came forth from the trial with a chastened spirit, and a more unreserved consecration of herself to the service of her Saviour. The Lord had removed the last member of her family living with her, that she might devote all her thoughts and energies to his own cause.

This season of bereavement caused her friends to rally around her, and to pour in their consolatory letters from all sides. Whitefield was on the point of embarking for America, and rejoiced that her daughter died so triumphantly, and that her Ladyship was so divinely supported. Lord Dartmouth conveyed his and Lady Dartmouth's sympathy to her in a very beautiful letter in which he says, "We are deeply indebted to your Ladyship, more deeply than we can express. Our obligations are of a nature never to be repaid by us; but you will be rewarded openly before an assembled world, when we shall swell that innumerable train of children, which the Lord hath given to you. There, Madam, we shall hope to meet you, and join your beautiful child." Letters were also received from Messrs. Venn, Romaine, Fletcher, Berridge and others, consoling the Countess under her affliction. The letter of Berridge is so characteristic that we give it entire.

"Everton, June 23rd, 1763.

"My Lady,—I received your letter from Brighthelmstone, and hope you will soon learn to bless your Redeemer for snatching away your daughter so speedily. Methinks I see great mercy in the suddenness of her removal, and when you have done yearning for her; you will see it too. O! what is she snatched from? why, truly, from the plague of an evil heart, a wicked world, and a crafty devil; snatched from all such bitter grief as now overwhelms you; snatched from everything that might wound her ear, afflict her eye, or pain her heart. And what is she snatched to? To a land of everlasting peace, where the voice of the turtle is ever heard, where every inhabitant can say, 'I am no more sick,'—no more whim in the head, no more plague in the heart; but all full of love and full of praise, ever seeing with enraptured eyes, ever blessing with adoring hearts, that dear Lamb who has washed them in his blood, and has now made them kings and priests unto God for ever and ever, Amen. O Madam! what would you have? Is it not better to sing in heaven, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain,' &c., than crying at Oathall, 'O wretched woman that I am?' Is it not better for her to go before, than to stay after you, and then to be lamenting, 'Ah, my mother!' as you now lament 'Ah, my daughter?' Is it not better to have your Selina taken to heaven, than to have your heart divided between Christ and Selina? If she was a silver idol before, might she not have proved a golden one afterwards? She is gone to pay a most blessed visit, and will see you again by and by, never to part more. Had she crossed the sea and gone to Ireland, you could have borne it; but now she is gone to heaven, 'tis almost intolerable. Wonderful strange love this! Such behaviour in others would not surprise me, but I could almost *beat you* for it; and I am sure Selina would beat you too, if she was called back but one moment from heaven, to gratify your fond desires. I cannot soothe you, and I must not flatter you. I am glad the dear creature is gone to heaven before you. Lament if you please; but glory, glory, glory, be to God, says

JOHN BERRIDGE."

Lady Huntingdon spent a short time at Brighton after the death of Lady Selina; and then repaired to Oathall in June, to make arrangements for recommencing the services, which had been suspended since the illness of her daughter. Mr. Madan was now supplying her chapel at Brighton, and was soon afterwards joined by Mr. Venn, who came to London to arrange the publication of his "*Complete Duty of Man*," and was persuaded by the Countess to meet her at Brighton. Her heart was overflowing with love and gratitude to Christ, and yearned for the salvation of her fellow-creatures. She had a deep sense of her obligations for the many blessings she had recently enjoyed, and wished to testify her thankfulness by more active labours in her Master's service; she, therefore, consulted these two devoted ministers on a plan which she had formed to bring the gospel into other benighted localities. She beheld with satisfaction the blessed results of her efforts at Brighton and Oathall; and she longed to become instrumental in awakening an interest for religion in some other town. Her attention was directed to Tunbridge Wells.

This rising town had gained great celebrity by its mineral springs, and was a place of considerable resort for fashionable and noble society, as well as for the sick and invalid. It was the scene of much gaiety and pleasure; and witnessed all the vices, which at this period flourished so luxuriantly in watering-towns. Little attention was here paid even to the forms of religion; the sabbath was a day of amusement and frolic, when every one did what was right in his own eyes; and the chapel, which had been erected after the Restoration, and dedicated to King Charles the Martyr, was but scantily attended. The spiritual destitution of the town, and the numbers of visitors who flocked to it, attracted the attention of Lady Huntingdon; and after consulting with her friends, she resolved to visit this fashionable place, and see what means could be taken to erect the gospel-standard among the people. Accompanied by Messrs. Venn and Madan, she entered the town, and made inquiries respecting the spiritual condition of the neighbourhood. She was agreeably surprised to find that it was far more favourable than she had anticipated. Sir Thomas I'Anson, who resided in the neighbourhood, had exerted himself to introduce the gospel, with some success. His house was thrown open for preaching, where many were deeply impressed with the truth, and were anxious to enjoy more publicly the ordinances of religion.

The name of Lady Huntingdon was now so identified with the cause of evangelical religion, that her arrival, with her ministers, was hailed by the godly as the commencement of a new era in the spiritual condition of the place. The clergy became alarmed. The chapel belonging to the Established Church was refused to Messrs. Madan and Venn; but the large Presbyterian place of worship, where occasionally Wesley and others had proclaimed the message of mercy, was freely placed at their disposal. This building, however, soon became too small to contain the crowds which thronged the doors; and the Countess, cheered by the eagerness of the people to listen to the gospel, urged these zealous clergymen to stand in the open-air, and imitate the example of Christ by addressing the multitudes. It was a new and startling occurrence at Tunbridge Wells, and created a great stir among the people. All classes poured out of their abodes to see this great sight; and a large and diversified congregation gathered around the little band of Christ's servants. Mr. Venn preached from the invitation of our Lord, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He had proceeded but for a short time, before a man, who stood near him, suddenly cried out, fell down, and expired. A thrill of fear ran through the congregation; and after a pause, Mr. Venn, in the most solemn and impressive manner, availed himself of the circumstance to remind them of the uncertainty of life, and of the necessity of at once fleeing to Christ for pardon and peace. His words fell upon the ears of the people with great power; the tears rolled down the cheeks of many; and there were few present who did not feel the solemnity of the occasion. When he had concluded, the people still lingered around the spot; and Lady Huntingdon urged Mr. Madan to address them before they went away. The Countess was greatly cheered by the prospect of doing good in the town; the readiness of the people to hear the Gospel was to her an indication that God had directed her steps thither: and she resolved as soon as possible to cultivate this vineyard for the Lord. She says, "The fields are white already to harvest. May the precious name of Him, who died to save, be made very dear to many in this place; and may this grain of mustard-seed become, by the blessing of God, a flourishing tree, extending its branches far and wide."

Lady Huntingdon could not stay long at Tunbridge Wells to follow up the good which had been effected.

Mr. Venn was obliged to hasten into Yorkshire; and Mr. Madan to London, and Everton, to enable John Berridge to set out for Oathall, where he preached during the month of August. The Countess was still in a delicate state of health. Her anxiety for the prosperity of her chapels, and her sorrow for her departed child, brought her into a very low state. She was then attacked with a fever, which prostrated her strength, though only for a short time. Berridge refers to this in one of his letters, before he came into the south; and says, "Nothing expels undue grief of mind like bodily correction. Nothing makes the child leave crying like the rod; at least I find it so by experience. A little whipping from your Father will dry up your tears much sooner than a thousand pretty lullabies from your brethren."

The Countess continued at Brighton during the autumn and winter; where she enjoyed the company of two distinguished friends, Mrs. Carteret and Mrs. Cavendish, who were visiting her at her residence. These ladies were sisters, and were allied to two of the noblest and most ancient families in England. They formed a part of the great harvest which had been gathered among the nobility at the house of her Ladyship in London, where they first heard and received the glad tidings of salvation. They united their influence and wealth to that of Lady Huntingdon, and other honourable women; made many exertions to spread the truth, wherever they went; and frequently accompanied the Countess on her visits to Bath and Clifton. Mrs. Carteret was much attached to Mr. Venn; and when he visited her on her death-bed, she took hold of his hand, and prayed most earnestly that Jesus would blot out all her sins, clothe her in his perfect righteousness, and grant her a happy dismissal to glory. Her sister was equally attached to her Ladyship's ministers; and departed this life, full of hope, soon after death had snatched away her beloved companion. They were "lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided."

Lady Huntingdon spent the year 1764 in visiting the various places, where she had been accustomed to meet her friends to hear the gospel; and divided her time between London, Bath, and Brighton. She now added to the number of her chaplains, the Hon. and Rev. Walter Shirley, Rector of Loughrea, in Ireland. He was brother to the unfortunate Earl Ferrars, and cousin to her Ladyship; and was introduced by her to most of the leading characters in the religious world. The ministry and conversations of Mr. Venn were so greatly blessed to him, that he ever after styled himself "his son in the gospel." His connection with her Ladyship raised a violent storm of persecution against him in his own country; his name was blackened with opprobious epithets; the clergy were shamed by his zealous and energetic labours, and closed their churches against him; and wherever he went he was followed by their bitterest resentment and opposition. His heart was too deeply impressed with the truth to allow his lips to be sealed by clerical intolerance; and the persecution he met with only stimulated his efforts to spread abroad more widely the simple doctrines of the gospel. He became a warm and devoted labourer in the various chapels which Lady Huntingdon erected.

Mr. Romaine was during this year most bitterly persecuted in London. The only church preferment he held was the lectureship at St. Dunstan's, which brought him in the astonishing salary of eighteen pounds a year! He was now threatened with the loss even of this. His preaching highly offended the rector, who now took possession of the pulpit, while the Liturgy was being read, to prevent Romaine preaching to the congregation. He appealed to law; and Lord Mansfield, the Lord Chief Justice, decided that Romaine could not be excluded from the pulpit. The opposition-party, however, did everything to annoy the preacher;—the church doors were kept closed till the commencement of divine service; and when they were opened, the thousands who were crowding the street, rushed in, like a foaming torrent, regardless of the sanctity of the place, or their own comfort and safety. The churchwardens refused either to light the church, or permit it to be lighted; and Romaine might often have been seen preaching by the light of a single candle, which he held in his hand, and which gave a ghastly hue to the vast crowds who were profoundly listening to the eloquent minister. At length the influence of the Bishop of Peterborough put an end to these proceedings, and secured tranquility to Mr. Romaine.

During this year there occurred an election for the living of St. Ann's, Blackfriars; the right of presentation to which is vested alternately in the crown and in the parishioners. The late incumbent was the nephew of the Lord Chancellor Henley, an intimate friend of the Countess; who was seized with a putrid fever, while visiting a person infected with that frightful disorder, and died, after holding the living six years and a half. As soon as Lady Huntingdon heard of the vacancy, she immediately thought of Romaine, and took active measures to secure, if possible, his election. She spoke to the Lord Chancellor to solicit his influence; and at her suggestion, John Thornton and Mr. Madan went among the parishioners to secure their votes. Romaine was absent in Yorkshire; and his enemies industriously circulated the most foolish reports respecting him. They stated that he was a very proud and overbearing man; that his preaching would never suit them; and that he never came personally to ask their votes. They drew a contrast between him and the other candidates, who came to them in their canonicals, and humbly solicited their favour. The candidates were to preach the probation sermon the end of September, 1764; and the friends of Romaine requested him to come to London for the occasion. It was an anxious time for them. To avoid giving offence, and to afford the parishioners every accommodation, Lady Huntingdon and her friends kept away; and Romaine preached an eloquent sermon on the words, "We preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." It was exceedingly well received, and afterwards printed at the request of the inhabitants.

The election proceeded; and a great trouble ensued between the two parties. A scrutiny was demanded; and a second election gave Romaine a great majority. The opposition, however, was so determined, that new difficulties were raised, and the matter finally thrown into the Court of Chancery. For more than a year, this vexatious suit was prosecuted with unwearied diligence. The Countess watched its progress with the deepest interest; and Romaine preached for her during its continuance, and frequently corresponded with her on the subject. His mind was calmly staid on God. He says, "Blackfriars' church is desirable, but we cannot tell whether Jesus wants it, or not; if he does, he will bring it about; if not, his will be done." At length, after many tedious delays, the Lord Chancellor Henley decided in his favour, in February, 1766; and Romaine was accordingly inducted into the living. His friends greatly rejoiced at his success; but he knew too well the state of the parish to indulge in many glowing visions. He says, "I can see nothing before me, so long as the breath is in my body, but war, and that with unreasonable men, a divided parish, an angry clergy, a wicked Sodom, and a wicked world." No one was more zealous in his cause, and rejoiced more at his success, than the noble-hearted Countess. Mr. Jesse, of West Bromwich, who was with Lady Huntingdon and Mr. Shirley at Oathall, describes the interest she took in the welfare of her minister, and in his success. "We have had quite a little jubilee on the confirmation of the validity of our dear brother Romaine's election. Never have I seen more heart-felt joy and gratitude than was expressed on that occasion by her Ladyship. I verily believe that if Mr. Romaine had not gained his election, the disappointment and vexation would have well nigh killed her." The anxiety of the Countess arose, not so much from her concern for the personal comfort and pecuniary advantage of her chaplain, though she could not be indifferent to these things, as for the consequences which would have resulted to the interests of true religion, if the enemies of the gospel had triumphed in Blackfriars. The church occupied a most commanding position in a populous neighbourhood, and exerted an extensive influence around; and the Countess was desirous of obtaining it for Mr. Romaine, that not only its walls might ring with the glad tidings of salvation, but its influence might be of that holy nature, which would further the spread of the gospel, and induce multitudes to listen to its important truths. Her Ladyship was inflamed with holy zeal; and she was determined to act on the advice of Romaine —to get churches, and pray for evangelical ministers;— and the remainder of her life was occupied in providing both.

CHAPTER XIII. A.D. 1764—1767.

THE POWER OF EXAMPLE.—THE CHAPEL AT LEWES.—WORTHING.—LADY HUNTINGDON'S CATHOLICITY.—CHAPEL AT BRETBY.—OPENING OF THE CHAPEL AT BATH.—HER MINISTERS.—FLETCHER.—CONVERSION OF LADY GLENORCHY.—DEATH OF THE EARL AND COUNTESS OF SUTHERLAND.—ANECDOTE.—LETTER OF LADY HUNTINGDON TO MRS. POWYS.—WESLEY AT BATH.—HORACE WALPOLE.—NICODEMUS' CORNER.—THE NOBILITY FLOCK TO THE CHAPEL.—ENLARGEMENT OF BRIGHTON CHAPEL.

THE efforts of Lady Huntingdon were not confined to the locality where she had erected a place of worship. Brighton was a centre of influences which radiated in all directions,—the starting point, whence her devoted ministers issued to carry the gospel into the neighbouring towns and villages. The Countess was always the pioneer in these preaching excursions; she procured the Established Churches for her learned chaplain, Mr. Romaine, wherever she could; stood by her ministers whenever they preached in the open air; shared in the privations and perils they had to undergo; and braved with them the storms of persecution to which not unfrequently they were exposed. Her example was well calculated to animate their zeal, and sustain their faith. She surrendered all the luxuries and comforts of life, endured the scorn and animosity of the wicked, rejoiced in the thought that she was counted worthy to suffer shame for Christ, and even counted not her own life dear unto her; that she might have the unspeakable satisfaction of knowing, that the tidings of salvation were proclaimed to perishing sinners. God smiled upon her disinterested efforts; and made her the honoured instrument of planting the gospel standard in the midst of the strongholds of Satan's empire.

The town of Lewes, Sussex, early attracted her attention. It was then a place of considerable notoriety for trade, situated to the north-east of Brighton, and was most delightfully located on the banks of the Ouse, which opened up a communication with the sea at New-haven. Her chaplains visited this place at her request; and in the beginning of the year 1765, she procured one of the churches for Mr. Romaine. His preaching, however, gave great offence to the rector, who closed the pulpit against him; and her chaplain afterwards preached in a large room, and ultimately in the open fields. He once preached on the text "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," to a large congregation; and there was reason to believe that many were deeply impressed with the truth. Lady Huntingdon could not then prolong her stay at Lewes; and in February, she hastened to London, where she visited her aunt Lady Fanny Shirley, and in company with her chaplains, attended the performance of the oratorio "*Ruth*" at the Lock chapel. Mr. Madan and Dr. Haweis, chaplains to the Hospital, were very musical, and composed several tunes. Among the productions of Mr. Madan are the well-known popular pieces, "*Before Jehovah's awful throne.*" "*From all that dwell below the skies.*" "*Salvation, O the joyful sound.*" "*To God the only wise.*" After a short visit, she returned to Brighton, and again repaired to Lewes in the company of Messrs. Madan and Fletcher. She obtained permission for these ministers to preach in the churches; but the opposition of the clergy to their doctrines speedily drove them from the pulpits, and obliged them to hire a large room, where they preached to great numbers. She was satisfied that the Lord had called her to erect a chapel in this place.

The opposition of the clergy to the spiritual doctrines of the gospel, the desire of the people to listen to the truth, the impression made on many of the hearers, and their earnest request that they might enjoy the ministrations of some evangelical preacher, combined to determine her Ladyship to erect a place of worship at Lewes. It was opened on the 13th of August, 1765, when sermons were preached by Dr. Peckwell, rector of Bloxham, Lincolnshire, who afterwards frequently ministered in her chapels; by Mr. Pentycross, afterwards rector of Wallingford; and by the celebrated George Burder, then about to enter on his career as an independent minister. This chapel was regularly supplied by her Ladyship's ministers, and afterwards by her students.

In the month of April, Romaine again visited Lady Huntingdon at Brighton, where Mr. Howell Davies was zealously labouring. At this period the present fashionable watering-town of Worthing was a small fishing place; though even now it began to be visited by a few persons, who wished to enjoy the quietude of the country, and the benefit of sea-bathing, for which its extensive sands were far preferable to the shingles of Brighton. Into this place, she attempted to introduce the gospel, and went thither with her ministers to reconnoitre the locality. While Howell Davies was preaching, several clergymen assembled, and used every exertion to create a riot among the people; but they were defeated in their object; and went away, threatening revenge on the first Methodist preacher they met with. After visiting this town a few times, the Countess did not attempt anything further here, but confined her labours for the present to the three chapels she already possessed in Sussex.

The tone of Lady Huntingdon's mind was exalted far above the narrow feelings of sectarian principles. She had her own views and principles, which she held with a tenacity, that nothing but a conviction of their erroneousness could ever have destroyed; but she never constituted them the standard by which to test others, and to pronounce sentence upon them. Her catholicity embraced all pious ministers, who held the essential truths of the gospel; and though she was thoroughly attached to the services of the Established Church, she frequently observed, that she had no objection to hear the truth from the lips of a dissenter, provided he has no design to form a party; and delighted to correspond with such liberal-minded men as Doddridge, Watts, and others. By the advice of Howell Davies, she wrote to the Rev. D. Edwards, a dissenting minister at Ipswick, and invited him to supply her chapel at Brighton. This eminent minister was of the same catholic spirit as Lady Huntingdon, and in a long letter to her, descants on the importance of its manifestation. He says, "I have had repeated evidences from many parts of the kingdom, that your Ladyship's truly catholic spirit has influenced many; and a review of that evangelical temper, which you cultivate, will afford an inward satisfaction, which applause cannot give, or censure take away. What a great historian says of Vespasian is equally applicable to your Ladyship;—that your noble descent and your rich abundance have changed nothing in you but this, that your power of doing good is made in some degree to answer your will, counting it a greater honour to lay out for God than to lay up for yourself."

Lady Huntingdon shortly after quitted Brighton, and repaired to Bath. Her labours in this beautiful city had been crowned with the divine blessing; and she resolved to erect a permanent residence and a chapel, that she might be enabled to glorify God on a more extensive scale. She selected an appropriate piece of ground in the Vineyards, and with great zeal commenced building her house, and that chapel which for nearly a century has attracted crowded audiences to hear the glad tidings of salvation. While these buildings were in progress, Lady Huntingdon accepted Lord Chesterfield's offer of his house and chapel at Bretby Hall, Derbyshire. She was accompanied by Mr. Jesse, of West Bromwich, and arrived at his Lordship's residence about the end of July; and was soon after followed by Mr. Romaine, and Mr. Townsend, rector of Pewsey, Wilts. These ministers alternately preached at the Hall chapel; but when Whitefield, who had just returned from America, visited them on his way to London, the audience was so great that, while Romaine preached in the chapel, the other ministers addressed the vast crowds in the extensive park surrounding the mansion. Their labours, however, were not confined to Bretby; for Romaine says in one of his letters, "Fifteen pulpits were open, and showers of grace came down; but Mrs. Wordsworth (Townsend's sister) was taken ill, and obliged to go to Bath, and this broke up the party." Lady Huntingdon returned to Bath with Mr. Townsend and his sister, and Romaine journeyed to Brighton and Oathall.

The chapel was now nearly completed; and the Countess wrote to her various ministers to summon them to be present on the joyful occasion of dedicating it to the service of God. Romaine was reaping a plentiful harvest in her chapels at Brighton and Oathall; and wrote to her, "The society most earnestly entreat you, if Mr. Madan should come down to Bath, that I may be suffered to stay here with them. Why should we both be there at the same time, to stand in one another's way?" Mr. Madan was unable to attend, and the Countess wrote again to Romaine, pressing him to come; but he replied, "I must openly tell you that my very heart and soul are now in this work; inasmuch that I have not minded going to Oathall wet to the skin, for the joy that was set before me." At length the arrangements were completed; and on the 6th of October, 1765, this substantial and commodious chapel was thrown open for the public worship of God, and the preaching of the gospel. The place was densely crowded with an attentive audience, and great numbers of the nobility, who had been specially invited by her Ladyship, attended. Whitefield preached an eloquent discourse in the morning from II Cor. vi, 16, and Mr. Townsend proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation in the evening. In a letter to his friend, Robert Keene, Whitefield says:—"Could you have been present at the opening of the chapel, you would have been much pleased. The building is extremely plain, and yet equally grand. A most beautiful original! All was conducted with great solemnity. Though a wet day, the place was very full, and assuredly the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls consecrated and made it holy ground by his presence."

Whitefield preached at Bath but a few times, being obliged soon to return to London; but Mr. Madan speedily arrived, and attracted considerable notice in the city. Mr. Romaine also spent some weeks at her Ladyship's house, and preached with great power and success in her chapel. He deemed it no slight honour to be associated with the gifted Whitefield in proclaiming the truths of the gospel. He followed up his early labours at Brighton; and though for prudential reasons, and for the purpose of securing an entrance into the pulpits of the Establishment, he did not officiate in Whitefield's chapels, he honoured his character, gloried in his friendship, and associated with him in his extensive labours. Both were excellent and remarkable men, though possessing different qualities. For popular eloquence and commanding oratory, Whitefield was unrivalled; but in erudition, and critical knowledge of the Scriptures, Romaine was far superior to him, and to most of his contemporaries.

Lady Huntingdon passed the winter of 1765 between Brighton and Oathall, and returned to Bath in the beginning of the spring of the next year. Shortly after her return, the Countess invited Mr. Fletcher from Madeley to preach in her chapel. He accepted the invitation; and soon attracted large audiences by his fervid and spiritual addresses. He had made astonishing progress in acquiring the English language, which he now spoke with a fluency and precision, which, when animated with his lively feelings, rendered his eloquence peculiarly touching and impressive. His friend Mr. Gilpin says of him:—

"There was an energy in his preaching that was irresistable. His subjects, his language, his gestures, the tone of his voice, and the turn of his countenance, all conspired to fix the attention, and affect the heart. Without aiming at sublimity, he was truly sublime; and uncommonly eloquent, without affecting the orator. He was wondrously skilled in adapting himself to the different capacities and conditions of his hearers. He could stoop to the illiterate, and rise with the learned; he had incontrovertible arguments for the sceptic, and powerful persuasions for the listless believer; he had sharp remonstrance for the obstinate, and strong consolation for the mourner. To hear him without admiration was impossible; without profit, improbable! The unthinking went from his presence under the influence of serious impressions, and the obdurate with kindled relentings."

It was during her present stay in Bath, that Lady Huntingdon became acquainted with Lady Glenorchy; a name which was soon associated with all that is good and holy in the metropolis of Scotland. Lord and Lady Glenorchy had lately returned from the continent, and resided at Great Sugnal, a short distance from Hawkestone, the celebrated seat of Sir Rowland Hill. At this time, several members of the family—Mr. Richard Hill, his brother Rowland, their eldest sister, and Elizabeth, another sister—were of a decidedly pious character; and bore with meekness the reproach which the world cast upon them, because of their religion. Lady Glenorchy soon became intimate with the Hills, and often expressed the wish that she possessed the peace and happiness which she perceived they enjoyed. A warm attachment speedily grew up between her and Miss Hill, who was about her own age, and became her bosom friend. In the summer of the year 1765, her Ladyship was seized with a dangerous putrid fever, which confined her to her bed for a considerable time. This affliction, however, was the means of leading her to see her sinful state by nature, and to confide in Christ alone for salvation. She then felt the value of possessing such a gentle, wise, and affectionate friend as she found in Miss Hill, whose holy conversation exerted a most blessed influence on her mind and body. The joy of the believer was awakened in her heart; and she resolved to forsake the gaieties of the world, to consecrate herself to Christ and to spend the remainder of her life in promoting the interests of his kingdom. As soon as she was well enough to bear the fatigue of a long journey, she repaired to Bath; where her friends tried every inducement to lead her to forget her past sorrows, and shake off her serious impressions, by mingling with gay and fashionable society. She, however, remained firm in her purpose to devote her whole energies and influence to the cause of Christ. Her intimacy with Lady Huntingdon, at this critical period, was of essential service to her. The excellent advice, and scriptural conversation of the Countess, and the preaching of her devoted ministers, greatly contributed to establish her faith, and animate her zeal; and prepared her to tread firmly the path which the providence of God had marked out for her. Her career was a very checkered one; yet all her trials and temptations, her afflictions and the reproaches of friends, could not move her from the position she had taken, nor quench the burning love which she felt towards perishing souls. She was destined to be the SELINA of Scotland. Lady Huntingdon was her *model;* from her she drank copious draughts of spiritual truth, and caught that inspiration which urged her along in her noble efforts. She left Bath in the spring; and soon after her arrival in Edinburgh, thus expressed to Lady Huntingdon her gratitude and thanks for the inestimable benefits she had conferred upon her by her conversation and society:—

"My dear Madam,—How shall I express the sense I have of your goodness? It is impossible in words. But my comfort is, that the Lord knows the grateful thoughts of my heart, and he will amply reward you for the kindness you have shown a poor unworthy creature, whom blindness and ignorance rendered an object of pity. When you say your heart is attached to me, I tremble lest I should prove an additional cross to you in the end; and the pain I suffer in the apprehension of this is unspeakable. I hope the Lord permits it as a spur to me to be watchful, and to keep near to him, who alone is able to keep me from falling. I can truly say, that, next to the favour of God, my utmost ambition is to be found worthy of the regard which your Ladyship is pleased to honor me with, and to be one of those who shall make up the crown of rejoicing for you in the day of our Lord.

I am sorry to take up more of your precious time than is needful to express my gratitude for the obliging lines your Ladyship favoured me with; and will only add, that I ever am, with the greatest respect and affection, my dear and much honoured Madam, your most obedient servant, W. GLENORCHY."

A short time after the departure of Lady Glenorchy, the Earl and Countess of Sutherland came to Bath in deep distress at the untimely death of their eldest daughter. The Countess, who was the only sister of Lady Glenorchy, gave her a letter of introduction to Lady Huntingdon. They called upon her Ladyship, who manifested a very strong interest in them. "Never," she says, "have I seen a more lovely couple; they may, indeed, with justice be called the *Flower of Scotland;* and such amiability of disposition, so teachable, so mild! They have indeed been cast in Nature's finest mould. Bowed down to the earth by grief, they are almost inconsolable for the loss of their daughter. Dear Lady Glenorchy is extremely anxious on their account." At this critical period in their history, Whitefield came to Bath to supply the chapel. He says in a letter to a friend, dated March 17th, 1766, "Last Friday evening, and twice yesterday, I preached at Bath to very thronged and brilliant auditories. I am told it was a high day. The glory of the Lord filled the house. To-morrow, God willing, I return thither again. Mr. Townsend is too ill to officiate. Lady Huntingdon is mounting on her high places." The Earl and Countess were induced to attend the preaching of the gospel at the chapel. The opportunity of doing this was not long continued; for shortly after their arrival, the Earl was attacked by a violent fever, with which he struggled fifty-four days, and then expired, in the fifty-first year of his age. His Countess was unremitting in her attention to him; for twenty-one days and nights she watched over him in his chamber, without retiring to rest; and when he died, she gave way to the most poignant grief, which crushed her to the ground. Lady Huntingdon was her true friend in the season of her anguish; she visited her frequently, and endeavoured to pour into her bleeding heart the rich consolations of the gospel: and caused public prayers to be offered on her behalf at the chapel. The blow, however, was too severe for her devoted heart to bear. Her strength was prostrated by the fatigue of watching at the bedside of her husband; her mind was consumed with grief; and in seventeen days after his death, she fell a victim to that disease which had snatched away her beloved partner. The melancholy event spread a general gloom over the gay inhabitants of Bath; the deep interest, which their death awakened, was increased by the spectacle of the infant daughter, left an orphan; and many were induced to attend the chapel, who had hitherto refused to enter it, and were impressed with serious convictions. Two sermons were preached there on the solemn occasion, when most of the nobility then in Bath attended; and the mysterious stroke of God's providence reminded many of their own frailty and sinfulness, and brought them to submit to the authority of Christ.

A remarkable circumstance occurred in connection with this sudden bereavement. It may appear strange and unaccountable, but it is a fact, that Lady Alva, the mother of the Countess, knew nothing of the death of her daughter till nearly three weeks after the event had taken place. The death of the Earl had been communicated, but not that of the Countess. The manner in which she became acquainted with it was peculiarly singular and impressive. When she was hastening from Scotland to the assistance of her daughter, she happened to alight from her carriage at the door of a certain inn on the road to Bath. She saw two hearses standing near, and curiosity prompted her to ask whose remains they contained. Her feelings may be easier imagined than described, when she was informed that they contained the remains of Lord and Lady Sutherland, which were going to Scotland to be interred in the ancestral vault!

Shortly after the death of her friends, Lady Huntingdon left Bath for Brighton; where she remained the principal part of the summer, actively engaged in the work of the Lord. She was here visited by Mr. and Mrs. Powys, who were intimate friends of Whitefield, and warm admirers of her Ladyship. Whitefield styled them, "his honoured and happy pair," and congratulated them that, while his cloud pointed towards Bath and Bristol, their's directed them to Brighton. He wrote to them, June 2nd, and says, "How glad will the noble Countess be of the intended visit! How will the hearts, both of the visited and visitors, be made to burn within them!" Messrs. Fletcher and Romaine were with her Ladyship during the stay of her friends; and in October, Mr. Fletcher, accompanied by Lady Huntingdon, came to London, where, says Whitefield, "he became a *scandalous* Tottenham-court preacher; and Mr. and Mrs. Powys went on a visit to Mr. Venn in Yorkshire. Thither the Countess sent the following letter to Mrs. Powys, which gives a fair specimen of the correspondence of her Ladyship with her friends, and her intense devotion to Christ.

"My Dear Madam,—As I have no expectation of seeing you again, from all the uncertainty of all things on earth, which suffers us not to call anything our own that time possesses us of, I could not forbear communicating my sentiments of love and tender regard to you and Mr. Powys, hoping that the conviction that will follow from them will be sufficient to assure you how glad I should be to wait upon you, though the interposition of providence may prevent my ever having that opportunity. I really mean that *my friendships, visits, conversations, with every intercourse of mankind, should lead to but one end.* I don't mean by this merely the necessary consistency required of a religious profession, or the splendid *appearances* of a devout (or sanctimonious) character. O, no! these the poorest and blindest hypocrite may excel in; but the *knowledge of truth*—

essentially and effectually distinguished from all the plausible opinions about it—*is my all!*

"These words in your letter struck me with a simplicity I loved;—'All I know is, that I am exceedingly ignorant, and have need to be taught as a little child.' To this real disposition is all trust eminently and specially addressed; and without this kind of docility, we must remain where we were. I don't suppose you consider it needful to become so, as to man; but are you so before Him who alone can teach, guide, and lead into all truth? Read from the 25th verse to the end of the 14th chapter of St. Luke; and see if, out of that great multitude that followed Him, you would have rejoiced when he turned and said to them, 'If any man come to me, and hate not,' &c., 'he cannot be my disciple;' for we hear of none that chose Him out of that multitude; and in what a state of preparation for heavenly things must that heart have been, that could have embraced Him in his low and despised estate so highly, as to fly from all things else, nearest and dearest, as hateful, to follow Him. Is then, this the disposition of your heart, my dearest Madam? This was not said to apostles, or eminently chosen instruments, but 'if *any man* come to me.' * * *

"A lady of great quality I knew, that had most serious and religious sentiments, and of this world, in person, fortune, family, friends, &c., an uncommon share. A gentleman, who was well acquainted with her, and saw the snares that would beset her in order to prevent the solid experience of the truth, dealt most plainly with her, and showed her the consequence of a divided heart. It gave her great pain for a time; but at and before her death, she would often cry out, 'O what great, what unspeakable obligations do I now feel for that dear and faithful friend *who dealt so plainly with me*;' and indeed her death was the most blessed proof of that solid and most substantial evidence she had of future glory; for mortality was swallowed up of life, visibly to others.

"It is this sort of friends I feel I want for myself, who will ever contend with every false rest I would set up; and with faith and zeal be hastening my slow and lazy steps through this rough wilderness of woe; such it only is to pilgrims; they cannot take up with what is in it, yet loiter in that way, when faith and love would make them wings to soar upon. * * *

"Thus, my dearest Madam, may you and I *practically* know, understand, and follow, by the guidance of the Spirit of truth, the meaning and intent of all religious truths revealed in the Bible; unless this is the case, we are, and shall be found, the sounding brass, and nothing better. To our great Prophet, Priest, and King may we ever trust and commit ourselves; and in his arms of love and mercy may we be found, when nothing else but the merits of his death, shall fill heaven and our hearts with his praises. I am, dearest Madam, your much obliged friend, and obedient humble servant,

S. HUNTINGDON."

"To Mrs. Powys."

The Countess of Huntingdon's chapel at Bath was, meanwhile, crowded with attentive and noble audiences. She procured the assistance of the most celebrated preachers to supply the pulpit. Whitefield preached there with his usual acceptance, though it was evident to his friends that his powers were becoming feeble through incessant toil. Wesley was particularly struck with the change in his appearance. He says, "He seems to be an old man, being fairly worn out in his Master's service, though he has hardly seen fifty years. He breathes nothing but peace and love. Bigotry cannot stand before him, but hides its head wherever he comes." Wesley had failed to accomplish his plan of uniting all the evangelical clergymen in England; and it was agreed that Lady Huntingdon, Whitefield, John and Charles Wesley, should meet as frequently as convenient, and co-operate with each other in the diffusion of truth. Wesley preached in Bath towards the end of August, and says, "Many were not a little surprised at seeing me in the Countess of Huntingdon's chapel. The congregation was not only large but serious; and I fully delivered my own soul." During his stay at Bristol, he offered his services to Lady Huntingdon, who, in a letter to him, dated September 14th, 1766, says:—

"I am most highly obliged by your kind offer of serving the chapel at Bath, during your stay at Bristol; I mean on Sundays. It is the most important time, being the height of the latter season, when the great of this world are only in the reach of the sound of the gospel from that quarter. The mornings are their time; the evenings, the inhabitants chiefly. I do trust that this *union* which is *commenced* will be for the furtherance of our faith and mutual love to each other. It is for the interest of the best of causes, that we should all be found, first, faithful to the Lord, and then to each other. I find something wanting, and that is a meeting now and then agreed upon, that you, your brother, Mr. Whitefield, and I, should at times be glad regularly to communicate our observations upon the general state of the work. Light might follow, and would be a kind of guide to me, as I am connected with many.

"Universal and constant usefulness to all, is the important lesson. And when we are fully and wholly given up to the Lord, I am sure the heart can long for nothing so much as that our time, talents, life, soul, and spirit, may become upon earth a constant and living sacrifice. How can I be most so, that is the *one object* of my poor heart. Therefore to have all the light that is possible, to see my way in this matter, is my prayer day and night; for worthy is the Lamb to receive all honour, and glory and blessing.

"What you say of reproach, I hope never to be without, so that it be for obeying. I am honoured by every degree of contempt, while my heart has its faithful testimony before Him who can search it to the bottom, and knows that his glory and the good of souls is my one object upon earth. I shall turn coward and disgrace you all, when I have any worse ground to stand upon; and I am sure my prayer will be answered, which has been made these seven-and-twenty years, that whenever his eye, which is as a flame of fire, sees any other end or purpose of my heart, he will remove my poor wretched being from this earth."

Wesley was very popular at her Ladyship's chapel, and drew a vast audience to hear him. This sanctuary was the chief place of resort for the nobility; and Horace Walpole, who was now visiting Bath, and attended with his friends, gave the following description of its appearance. "They have boys and girls with charming voices that sing hymns in parts. The chapel is very neat, with *true* gothic windows. I was glad to see that luxury is creeping in upon them before persecution. They have very neat mahogany stands for branches, and brackets of the same, in taste. At the upper end in a broad *hautpas* of four steps, advancing in the middle; at each end of the broadest part are two eagles, with red cushions, for the parson and clerk. Behind them rise three more steps, in the midst of which is a third eagle for a pulpit. Scarlet arm-chairs to all three. On either hand a balcony for elect ladies. The rest of the congregation sit on forms. Behind the pit, in a dark niche, is a plain table within rails; so you see the throne is for the apostle. Wesley is a clean elderly man, fresh coloured, his hair smoothly combed, but with a little *soupcon* of curl at the ends. Wondrous clever, but as evidently an actor as

Garrick. He spoke his sermon, but so fast, and with so little accent, that I am sure he has often uttered it, for it was like a lesson. There were parts and eloquence in it; but towards the end, he exalted his voice, and acted very vulgar enthusiasm." Such was the picture of this chapel ninety years ago. Horace Walpole would scarcely recognise the same in its present improved condition. There was one thing, however, which escaped the keen eye of Walpole. It was *a seat for Bishops;* who were frequently present during the service. The witty and eccentric Lady Betty Cobbe, daughter-in-law of Dr. Cobbe, Archbishop of Dublin, was cousin-german to Lady Huntingdon. Her influence was extensive, and was frequently exerted in bringing Bishops to the chapel, whom she always contrived to smuggle into the curtained seats immediately inside the door, where they heard the preacher, without incurring what they thought would be a dreadful disgrace if they were seen in such a place! This seat Lady Betty facetiously termed *"Nicodemus' Corner."*

Almost all the persons of distinction who visited Bath attended Lady Huntingdon's chapel; and Walpole states that it was quite a rage among persons in high life to form parties to hear the different preachers who officiated there. Among these he enumerates Lord Camden, High Chancellor; Lord Northington, President of the Council, Earl Chatham and family; Lord Rockingham; Lord Malpas; Lord and Lady Powys; Lord and Lady Buchan and family; Miss Rich, sister to Lord Lyttleton; Duke of Bedford and family; &c., &c. The Bishop of Derry attended frequently. His infirmities led him often to visit Bath, and ultimately to take up his residence there. He was introduced to Lady Huntingdon by Lady Betty Cobbe, and spent a considerable time in her society. He often went with Lady Betty to hear the various ministers, towards many of whom he manifested great kindness and friendship. On one occasion, Wesley spent an hour with him before he preached at the chapel, and was highly delighted with his pious conversation. When Wesley recommended Mr. Maxfield, the first local-preacher, for episcopal ordination, the Bishop readily complied, and said to the candidate, "Sir, I ordain you to assist that good man that he may not work himself to death."

At the beginning of the year 1767, Lady Huntingdon returned to Brighton to superintend the enlargement of her chapel. The preaching of the gospel had attracted such crowds, and produced such blessed results, that the place was far too small to accommodate the people. The chapel was closed during the alterations; and on the 20th of March, her Ladyship gathered her chaplains around her, and re-opened the sanctuary for worship. The previous day was devoted to earnest and solemn prayer. In the morning the Countess retired to her closet, and for several hours wrestled with God for a blessing to rest on the chapel she had erected for his service; and in the evening, a prayer-meeting was held in her house, when her ministers implored the divine sanction and presence. Lady Huntingdon was accustomed to anticipate the public prayers of her chaplains by her own private intercessions for the congregations. Before the officiating minister entered upon the discharge of his duties, she prayed in retirement that divine assistance might be given, to enable him to preach with wisdom, power, fidelity, and fervour; and that the hearers might have a serious mind and a retentive memory. While he was preaching, she was praying that the Lord might bless the message to her own heart, and the hearts of the people; and when the service was concluded, she often retired to her room, to pray that the Spirit would seal the instructions of the sanctuary, and bring many sinners to Christ. "The seed thus sown was watered by her abundant prayers and tears; and in the day of the revelation of all things, it may be seen that through prayers the Countess and others of kindred spirit wielded a no less mighty power in the revival than those whose coming was with observation in the public assemblies."

CHAPTER XIV. A.D. 1767.

LADY HUNTINGDON AT BATH.—MR. VENN.—CAPTAIN SCOTT.—DR. ANDREWS AND DR. WARBURTON.—REV. S. FURLEY.—LADY ANN ERSKINE.—THE COUNTESS VISITS YORKSHIRE.—STRANGE SCENES.—RODBOROUGH.—MADELEY.—BRETBY HALL.—HUDDERSFIELD.—HER LADYSHIP'S SERIOUS ILLNESS.—CONSOLATIONS OF FRIENDS.—MRS. DEAN.—SAMSON OCCUM, THE INDIAN PREACHER.—LADY HUNTINGDON AT BATH.—DEATH OF MRS. VENN.—REV. ROWLAND HILL.—LORD DARTMOUTH.—DEATH OF EARL BUCHAN.—SOLEMN SERVICES.

ON the 30th of March 1767, Lady Huntingdon left Brighton with Miss Orton, an intimate friend, for London, where she remained only a few days, and thence proceeded to Bath to visit her friends, and to witness the work of the Lord in that fashionable city. While her Ladyship was at the seaside, Romaine, Whitefield, and other distinguished ministers of Christ, preached in her chapel at Bath, and stimulated the hearts of the people with their heavenly fervour. Whitefield was succeeded by Mr. Venn, who was admirably calculated to attract and impress the illustrious hearers. He was a powerful and successful preacher, and was a most agreeable companion and friend. He had at his command a vast store of racy anecdotes, which he told with such effect that they illustrated the point he was enforcing, and deeply impressed it on the heart. After supplying her Ladyship's chapel at Bath for two months, he preached at Bristol, and Gloucester, and went to Talgart, whence he gives a beautiful account of a spot dear to the Countess—"Happy Trevecca"—and of Howell Harris, who had been with her at Brighton, and afterwards joined her at Bath, where he preached in her chapel, and in some of the houses of the nobility. Mr. Venn writes;—

"Howell Harris is the father of that settlement, and the founder. After labouring for fifteen years, more violently than any of the servants of Christ, in this revival, he was so hurt in body as to be confined to his own house for seven years. Upon the beginning of this confinement, first one and then another, whom the Lord had converted under his word, to the number of near a hundred, came and desired to live with him, and that they would work and get their bread. By this means, near one hundred and twenty, men, women, and children, from very distant parts of Wales, came and fixed their tents at Trevecca. We were there three days, and heard their experience; which they spoke in Welsh to Mr. Harris, and he interpreted to us. Of all the people I ever saw, this society seems to be the most advanced in grace. They speak as men and women who feel themselves every moment worthy of eternal punishment and infinitely base; and yet at the same time, have such certainty of salvation through the second Man, the Lord from heaven, as is indeed delightful to behold. My heart received a blessing from them and their pastor, which will abide with me."

His stay at Trevecca, however, was very short; and on his return to Huddersfield, he visited Mr. Powys, at Berwick, where he wrote a long letter to Lady Huntingdon. He says "From Trevecca, we came to Berwick, where, though we did not find you had yet made the squire a preacher, yet both his consort and himself were much the better in their souls for the rummaging they went through at Brighthelmstone;—not from the custom-house officers, but from one who is zealous least the revenue of Jesus should sustain damage, and that none should be deceived into a notion that their goods have the seal royal upon them, when it is no more than a counterfeit ticket. In a word, they are both, I trust, in earnest, seeking the face of the Lord, and to know the certainty of the words of truth."

During his stay at Berwick, he was surprised with a visit from Captain Scott, who was spending a few days with his friends in the neighbourhood, and rode over to deliver a letter from Mr. Romaine to Mr. Powys. His conversion to God had not been made known to them; and one morning, soon after breakfast and family prayer, Mr. and Mrs. Powys and Mr. Venn were looking from the parlour window in the front of the hall, and perceived a military officer in his uniform riding towards the house. Mr. Powys recognised him at a distance, and said, "Here comes Captain Scott; what can he want here? I am determined not to see him if I can avoid it." They immediately withdrew from the window. The Captain rode up, and asked if Mr. Powys was at home; and the servant uninstructed by his master to tell an untruth to avoid an inconvenience, replied that he was. Mr. Powys appeared, and received his visitor with an air of distant civility, thinking that his presence would be an interruption to the spiritual enjoyment of himself and his friends. The Captain presented Romaine's letter, which narrated the remarkable conversion of the officer. Mr. Powys read it with very deep interest; which at length so increased, that he caught Captain Scott in his arms, embraced him with the affection of a father, and cried out, in a voice tremulous with emotion, "Mr. Venn! Mrs. Powys! come! come here quickly. Here is Captain Scott a convert to Christ, a new creature in Christ Jesus!" They hurried to the spot, read the letter of her Ladyship's chaplain, embraced their brother in the faith; and like those pure spirits who weep over sinners, and sing over the penitent, they rejoiced over him with full and grateful hearts.

While Lady Huntingdon was at Bath, Dr. Andrews, who held the living of Stinchcombe, preached very frequently at her Ladyship's chapel, and united with her ministers in their work of faith. His delicate health prevented him labouring with as much energy as he wished; yet he braved the reproach which they suffered, accompanied them on their preaching excursions, and gloried in the brand of *Methodist,* which his clerical brethren stamped upon him. His Bishop, the intolerant Warburton, threatened him with the terrors of the spiritual court, if he continued his practices; and sarcastically wrote to him, "I shall insist upon your constant residence in your parish, not so much for the good you are likely to do there, as to prevent the mischief you may do by rambling about in other places." The Bishop continued to persecute him, because he was a Methodist, and had committed the unpardonable sin, in his eyes, of preaching for Lady Huntingdon. At length the Countess interfered. She wrote to his Lordship, trusting that her long and intimate acquaintance with him would induce him to relax his severity towards Dr. Andrews for her sake. She had little hope of success, as she knew the bitter enmity he cherished towards the Methodists, and his opposition to herself, whom, she says, "he sometimes treated most uncourteously;" and she was prepared for his laconic reply. "Mr. Andrews is under *my* jurisdiction, and I am resolved to keep him and his fanatic conduct within his own parish!"

Another zealous minister of the Gospel assisted her Ladyship at this time in her labours at Bath. The Rev. Samuel Furley had been connected with the Methodists from an early period; and after his ordination, had occasionally preached for Mr. Romaine. During his residence at Kippax, he became acquainted with Lady Hun tingdon through her niece Mrs. Medhurst, and afterwards often corresponded with her Ladyship. She introduced him to John Thornton, Esq., who generously presented him with the living of Roche, in Cornwall, to show his esteem for the Countess, and his high opinion of the talents of Mr. Furley. He seldom left his parish, except when his health required it; and then he generally repaired to Bath, and officiated in the Countess' chapel. During his short stay here, Lady Huntingdon frequently met him at the residence of Miss Gideon, the correspondent of Romaine, Venn and Whitefield, who was at this period greatly afflicted. Her Ladyship was a most constant attendant on the sick and the infirm. She watched at the bed-side with maternal solicitude; she read the most consoling passages of Scripture, prayed for them with very great fervour and unction, and cheered their desponding hearts by her lively and heavenly conversation. Her visits to Miss Gideon were highly prized by the sufferer and by Mr. Furley; and the Countess was surprised at the Christian fortitude and patience with which her friend bore her severe pains. A complaining word scarcely ever passed her lips; her soul was ripened under the chastising hand of God; and her faith and love strengthened in the fire of affliction.

Among the personal friends of Lady Huntingdon, who were at this period in Bath, was the illustrious Lady, who, from this time, became intimately associated with the Countess in her labours, and after Lady Huntingdon's death, regulated the affairs of the Connexion. Lady Ann Erskine was the daughter of the Earl of Buchan, and the eldest of a numerous family, which has furnished some of the brightest ornaments of the English and Scottish Bar. Her early days were spent in Scotland, where, when about seven years old, she was deeply affected with love to Jesus, and often prayed to him privately. As she grew up, her early impressions wore off; and for some years she lived, like too many of her rank and sex, in fashionable follies, and in the company of those who were strangers to themselves, never thought of the Lord, and whose love of pleasure created a disinclination for the consideration of solemn and important matters. The Earl of Buchan removed to Bath, where he became acquainted with Lady Huntingdon, whose holy conversation greatly contributed to revive and deepen the early convictions Lady Ann had experienced. A warm friendship, also, with the pious members of the Hawkestone family, greatly assisted her faith, and led her to make an open profession of evangelical religion. Her growing intimacy with the Countess developed the powers of her mind and the affections of her heart; and the congeniality of their views, spirit, and aspirations, induced Lady Huntingdon to invite Lady Ann to remain with her, as her friend and companion. She was then in her twenty-eighth year; and with the consent of her father, she accepted the invitation.

Early in the month of May, the Countess, Lady Ann Erskine, Miss Orton, and Howell Harris, who had been staying a short time with her Ladyship, left Bath in the company of Whitefield, on a preaching excursion towards Yorkshire and Scotland. Gloucestershire was the scene of their first labours; and Whitefield says:—

"We have had good seasons at Rodborough; I was regaled with the company of some simple hearted, first-rate old Methodists, of nearly thirty years standing. God willing, I am to preach to-morrow morning, and to have a general sacrament on Friday evening. I have been out twice in the fields. On Sunday I hope to take to Rodborough wood again. Good Lady Huntingdon, &c., were wonderfully delighted. She and her company lay at Rodborough House. They honoured dear Mr. Adams with their presence; he is but poorly and wants a nurse; perhaps before next Sunday he may be married to a simple-hearted, plain, good creature that hath waited upon him and the preachers near twenty years. She hath no fortune, but is one who, I think, will take care of and be obedient to him, for Christ's sake."

From Rodborough they proceeded to Gloucester, Whitefield's birth-place, where, he says, "we had a most blessed season. Thousands and thousands, I trust, heard, saw, and felt." He here parted from Lady Huntingdon to visit Wales, before he returned to London; and the Countess and her party journeyed to Hawkestone to visit Sir Rowland Hill, and thence proceed to Trevecca, where they were joined by Mr. Fletcher, who conducted them to Madeley, on their way into Derbyshire. In a letter to Whitefield, dated May 18th, Mr. Fletcher says:—

"I should be glad to go and be your curate some time this year; but I see no opening, nor the least prospect of any. What between the dead and the living, a parish ties one down more than a wife. If I could go anywhere this year, it should be to Yorkshire, to accompany Lady Huntingdon, according to a design that I had half formed last year; but I fear that I shall be debarred even from this. I set out, God willing, to-morrow morning for Trevecca, to meet her Ladyship there, and to show her the way to Madeley, where she purposes to stay three or four days, on her way to Derbyshire. What chaplain she will have there, I know not; God will provide. * * *

Last Sunday seven-night, Captain Scott preached to my congregation in a sermon which was more blessed, though preached only upon my horse-block, than a hundred of those I preach in the pulpit. I invited him to come and treat her Ladyship next Sunday with another, now the place is consecrated. If you should ever favour Shropshire with your presence, you shall have the captain's, or the parson's pulpit at your option. Many ask me whether you will not come to have some fruit here also;

what must I answer them? I, and many more, complain of stagnation in the work; what must we do? everything buds and blossoms around us, yet our winter is not over."

Lady Huntingdon remained a few days at Madeley, and enjoyed the pleasure of Captain Scott's company, who, at the request of Mr. Fletcher, preached to attentive congregations on the Sabbath-day from the horse-block, and on the following day to a very large assembly of people, who were attracted by curiosity to see the Countess and the preaching officer. From Madeley they proceeded to Bretby Hall, where they awaited the arrival of Messrs. Venn and Townsend. Mr. Venn had written to her Ladyship, before she set out,—as she had arranged the plan of the journey with great precision—and says:—

"Your coming into Yorkshire, attended by two such faithful labourers, will, I doubt not, be blessed exceedingly to the souls of the people, as your parlour-preaching will be to our own souls. If I can, I shall do myself the pleasure of meeting you at Bretby; if not on the ninth of next month, we shall receive you and your blessed company with that exalted joy which the Holy Ghost inspires. I must take the liberty of begging, your Ladyship will present our most respectful compliments to Lady Ann and Miss Orton, and express our sense of the favour they will confer on us by coming to my vicarage. We were in hopes you could have contrived to have spent a Sabbath with us, rather than at Kippax. Three thousand hearers would be present to receive the word of life here, whereas at the village there would be very few. Love to my flock, and desire for their good, prompt me to mention this. To make one of your tour to Scotland would delight me much indeed; but my complaint in my breast is returned, and I am not able to lift up my voice."

Her chapel at Bretby was at this time supplied by Messrs. Jesse and Maxfield; and on the arrival of the two expected clergymen, the five ministers, now surrounding the Countess, preached twice a day, and created great excitement in the neighbourhood. Their labours were greatly blessed in the conversion of souls.

On the 9th of June, Lady Huntingdon, attended by Messrs. Venn, Townsend, and Fletcher, arrived at Huddersfield, and was hospitably entertained by Mrs. Venn at the vicarage. At the earnest solicitation of the vicar, she remained there the following Sabbath, when Mr. Fletcher preached twice to very large and deeply attentive congregations, and scattered the seed of divine truth. The Countess proceeded thence to Aberford, and spent some time with her relative, Lady Margaret Ingham. From this place, the party made many excursions into the neighbouring towns and villages, that the benighted people might be visited with the light of the gospel. Once she went, with her ministers, to Haworth, the scene of the labours of the lamented Grimshaw; where the report that Messrs. Fletcher and Townsend would preach, had collected a vast multitude of people. The successor of Grimshaw, however, was averse to open-air-preaching, and refused the use of "Whitefield's pulpit." Lady Huntingdon remonstrated with him, but to no purpose; the people were waiting to hear the word of life; her two ministers were willing to preach; and her Ladyship, therefore, requested them to address the crowds in the open-air, and point them to Jesus.

Not long after the arrival of the Countess at Kippax on a visit to her niece, Mrs. Medhurst, she became so alarmingly indisposed as to preclude the possibility of journeying into Scotland, as she had arranged. She, therefore, sent Mr. Townsend forward to Edinburgh, where he was received with the greatest cordiality by Lady Glenorchy, and by many of the ministers, and preached with astonishing success in that city and other places. Her indisposition prevented her personally carrying out the plans she had formed for the general diffusion of divine truth in Yorkshire; though it did not damp the ardour of her zeal, nor diminish her anxiety to bring the gospel to the poor. She gathered around her such evangelical ministers as Madan, Venn, Fletcher, Conyers, John Ryland, curate of Huddersfield, and sent them out in different directions to blow the gospel trumpet. Some laboured in the surrounding villages and hamlets; some visited the distant parts of the county; and some extended their labours into the neighbouring counties. Whitefield was informed of the triumphant success which attended their efforts; and early in September, he hastened into Yorkshire, to enter upon "the blessed Methodist field-street-preaching plan before him;" visited Leeds, Newcastle, Sunderland, and Hartlepool, where he preached before the house of Romaine's mother; and spent one month in very active exertions to bring souls to Christ.

Lady Huntingdon was greatly cheered in her affliction by the kind and congenial friends who surrounded her. Her love for others attracted towards her the warmest gratitude of their hearts; and they strove how they could best increase the joy, and restore the health of their invaluable leader. Mr. Fletcher was obliged to return to Madeley; but he wrote a long consolatory letter to her Ladyship, which breathed towards her the sympathies of a warm and heavenly affection. "I have often heard," he says, "your Ladyship speaking admirably upon knowing Christ, and the power of his resurrection, together with the *fellowship of his sufferings*. The Lord will have you improve in that heavenly knowledge, therefore he gives you so long a lesson at this time. The lesson is hard, I grant, but the Master is so *loving*, the science so noble, and the scholar so used to severe exercises, that it is no wonder you are placed in this highest form. No cross, no crown! The heavier the cross the brighter the crown. I often wish I could bear your Ladyship's burden, but check this impotent wish, by rejoicing that One, who feels not only touches of sympathy, but love everlasting and almighty as himself, bears it for you, and bears you with it. On the bosom of this dear heavenly Physician I desire to place you. There I want you to enjoy all the birth-sweets of sickness, and when patience hath had its perfect work there, I beg you may live and love till I have received my dismission; and when yours is sealed, may I be allowed to come and meet your departing soul among those, whom you have made your friends with the mammon of unrighteousness, and with the blessings of Gospel righteousness, and who will long to welcome you to everlasting habitations."

The kind attentions of her friends, and the blessing of God, caused the indisposition of the Countess to pass away; and she was enabled to proceed to Leeds with her oldest chaplain, George Whitefield. She was, soon after her arrival, joined by Captain Scott, who was now at the height of his popularity. The crowds he collected were vast beyond conception; and the people listened to his simple yet thrilling addresses with the utmost attention and gladness. Here her Ladyship became acquainted with Mrs. Deane, a lady of great talent and literary accomplishments, and a near relative of Lord Irvine, of Temple Newson, near Leeds. She was then just emerging out of spiritual darkness into the light of the gospel, and was invited by the Countess to meet her ministers at her temporary residence. The conversations of Lady Huntingdon opened to her vigorous mind the great truths of Christianity; her influence attracted and won the homage of her heart; and her example formed the model which she placed before her, as worthy of her imitation. Mrs. Deane longed to bring her noble relatives to share with her the sweets of piety; she prayed for them with fervency of spirit, introduced them to the Countess, and prevailed upon them to attend the preaching of the gospel. When she had once heard a sermon which she thought would have deeply impressed their minds, she manifested her anxiety for their welfare, by audibly expressing the wish that Lady Irvine had been present. The efforts of Lady Huntingdon greatly aided her own; and in a letter to her Ladyship, Mrs. Deane informs her that the impressions made on the mind of Lady Irvine, by her last conversation with her, have remained, and that Lady Irvine acknowledges her deep obligation to the Countess for the light and comfort she was permitted to enjoy.

Considerable attention was about this period drawn to the labours of the Rev. Samson Occum, an Indian preacher, who, with the Rev. Mr. Whitaker, minister of Norwich, New England, had arrived in the summer of 1766, to obtain contributions towards supporting an Indian charity school, established by the founder and president of Dartmouth College. Occum was the first Indian preacher who had visited England; and having brought letters of introduction to Lady Huntingdon, he was well received among the religious circles. He officiated for Whitefield several times to large and attentive audiences; and during his stay in England, he preached in various parts of the country, and collected large sums of money, which were vested in trustees, of whom the Earl of Dartmouth was the principle. While he was in England, Lady Huntingdon showed many proofs of her interest in his mission. She frequently entertained him at her residence, introduced him to many of the pious nobility in England and Scotland, and generously contributed to the object of his visit. The accounts he gave of the state of the Mohegan Indians, his own tribe, awakened a lively interest in her heart. She became very anxious for their spiritual welfare; her benevolent heart yearned for their salvation;

her mind pictured the happy time when all the tribes would cast away their superstitions, and receive the gospel of Jesus Christ. Occum had been made very useful to many of his tribe in persuading them to renounce their idols and worship the Lord; and the Countess stretched towards them the sympathies of her heart, and longed to cultivate the heathen vineyard for the Lord. At present there were many obstacles in the way; but full of faith, she says, "I hope yet to have it in my power, if the Lord should see fit to continue me in his service, to extend some aid to this interesting people."

Lady Huntingdon left Yorkshire with Whitefield, and arrived in London early in October. Her stay was limited to a few days, when she proceeded to Bath for the winter. Soon after her arrival, she received the melancholy intelligence of the death of Mrs. Venn. She had been for some months in a declining state of health; and when the Countess was at Huddersfield, she perceived strong symptoms of a rapid decline. Her spirits generally had been remarkably lively and buoyant, but now they became very low and desponding; and the thought of being removed from her beloved husband and her children almost overwhelmed her. She suffered much pain, and often desired Mr. Venn and his curate, Mr. Ryland, to pray for some mitigation of it. God heard the prayers offered on her behalf; her agonies passed away; and a short time before she died, she appeared to be sleeping peacefully, then drew in her breath twice in heavy inspirations, and departed to the presence of her Saviour. Between Lady Huntingdon and this pious and accomplished lady, there had existed a warm friendship, which had commenced with her marriage to Mr. Venn, and every year had grown stronger and more affectionate. Shortly after the distressing event, her Ladyship wrote to the bereaved husband, and invited him to spend the winter with her at Bath. Her nieces, Mrs. Medhurst and Miss Wheeler, also invited him and his children to Kippax, that his mind might be relieved from the great grief which pressed heavily upon him. He wrote to Lady Huntingdon from Huddersfield, dated, October the 15th, 1767, and says:—

"The only return I can make your Ladyship, for the very tender sympathy you show for me in my present trial, is prayer to Him who has already made so much use of you as an instrument, that he would do so more and more. Six places I have been most cordially invited to; but I know my soul would receive a blessing under your roof, as it has done again and again. I am now a living witness of the truth you so strenuously maintain, and of the necessity of that truth in our miserable condition here below. Did I not know the Lord to be mine; were I not certain his heart feels even more love for me than I am able to conceive; were not this evident to me, not by deduction and argument, but by consciousness, by his own light shining in my soul, as the sun's doth upon my bodily eyes; into what a deplorable situation should I have been now cast! I have lost all that I could wish myself to have been, in the partner of my cares and joys; and lost her when her industry and ingenuity, and tender love and care of her children, were all just beginning to be perceived by the two eldest girls, and to strike them with a sense of the excellency of such qualities. I have lost her, when her own soul was as a watered garden, when her mouth was opened to speak for God, and he was blessing the testimony she bore to a free, full, and everlasting pardon in the blood of Jesus. Nevertheless, I can say, *all is well!* Hallelujah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. * * * * * *

"I have been enabled to remember your Ladyship in your sickness, and cannot but hope you will yet be spared, and many more seals be added to your labours of love before you rest above. I shall be much obliged for a letter, when health and leisure will permit; and returning you my most heart-felt thanks for your prayers, your example, your invitation, and a thousand instances of kindness to such a sinful man, I remain your servant in the bonds of Jesus.

H. VENN."

Towards the end of October Lady Huntingdon received a visit from the famous Rev. Rowland Hill, then a young man in his twenty-third year, returning to the university of Cambridge. She was on terms of friendship with the family at Hawkestone, and had for some time manifested great interest in the piety and zeal of some of its members, especially Miss Hill and her brother Richard. The report of the earnest piety of young Rowland soon reached the ears of the Countess. Though he was a student of St. John's College, he had preached in many places with much acceptance and success: he formed a small society among his fellow students, and others, of which he was appointed leader; and he stimulated them to preach Christ wherever they had an opportunity. His conduct was speedily assailed on all sides. His parents were decidedly opposed to his proceedings, and the heads of his college condemned them in the strongest terms. Threats were held out to intimidate him; the refusal of his degree, testimonials, and even money for his support, could not shake his determination; and the prospect of his expulsion from the university only stimulated his activity to serve his Master. He sought the advice of Messrs. Berridge and Whitefield, who encouraged him to persevere in his efforts. Lady Huntingdon manifested a warm interest in his career, and wrote to his parents an intercessory letter on his behalf. Through the instrumentality of Whitefield, it was arranged that young Rowland should pay a visit to her Ladyship at Bath. He left Hawkestone October 21st, and immediately proceeded to meet Lady Huntingdon. On his arrival in the city, he was received by her Ladyship, as she expresses it, "with open arms;" and preached in her chapel and expounded at her home "with much comfort." He also preached at the residence of Mrs. Layton, a lady who was very conspicuous in the religious circles at Bath, and the friend and correspondent of Berridge and other celebrated ministers. Here a great number of persons of distinction assembled; and the youthful preacher says, he was "rather dashed at the audiences," and adds, "I do not love to speak to fine people." He, however, enjoyed his visit much, and felt honoured by the marked attentions of the Countess. Her kindness to him in a season of distress, when he was under the frowns of his family, proved the sincerity of her friendship towards him. She says:—

"He was as my own son, received into my house, and preached in my pulpits. I have again written to Lady Hill in his behalf, my former application to Sir Rowland having met with no redress. But they obstinately refuse to answer any letter I write to entreat for him. There is no hope then from that quarter. But blessed be God, we have a strong-hold, a never failing source of comfort and support to look to under every trial * * * He has preached frequently, and great crowds attended at the chapel and at my house. His word fell with great power and some were pierced to the heart. Dear Mr. Brown was much delighted, and poured forth fervent prayers on his behalf, at our parting prayer-meeting, before he set off for Cambridge."

Mr. Brown was the vicar of a large parish near Taunton, and was then associated with Mr. Furley in supplying her Ladyship's chapel. He became a warm friend to Mr. Hill, and as vicar of Kingston, furnished him with his titles to orders. Lady Huntingdon says of him, "He is in many respects an extraordinary man. His classical knowledge, I am told, exceeds that of most men of his age and standing. His information is extensive, accurate and correct; his knowledge diversified and profound. But what I admire most is his zeal and devotedness of heart to God. His preaching is much admired, and is owned by the great Master of assemblies."

The health of Lady Huntingdon continued in a very precarious state and it must excite some surprise that she was able to accomplish so much, considering her frequent indisposition. During the month of October, she had been ailing, and aroused the fears of her friends; but towards its close, she was so far recovered that Romaine informed Mrs. Medhurst that "Lady Huntingdon was pure and well." The amendment, however, was of short duration; for early in November, she was attacked with an alarming illness, which lingered for many weeks, and totally incapaciated her for writing, or any active employment. The most serious apprehensions were entertained for her safety; prayers were daily offered for her at her chapel; thousands in all parts of the country supplicated the blessing of heaven to rest upon her; and a general gloom was spread over the fashionable circles at Bath, by the anticipation of her death. All were deeply impressed with the great loss the cause of vital religion would suffer, if she were removed. Mr. Venn wrote to her, "In your illness I could not but be concerned for the ark, and mentioned your chapels, and the unspeakable loss if they were not kept open. Lord Dartmouth said, 'Should Lady Huntingdon leave them to me, I should think myself *bound in conscience exactly to comply with her will.*' I said nothing more upon that head, but thought it proper to acquaint you." Her Ladyship was anxiously concerned for the fate of her chapels, and appears, from a letter, to have taken some steps to put them into Lord Dartmouth's hands in the event of her decease. His Lordship had been long intimate with her, and had attended her drawing-room services, where he became acquainted with several of the ministers who officiated at her residence. The Countess had a high regard for his character, and had won his veneration and esteem by the services she had rendered to him, in conciliating his friends, when they were bitterly persecuting him for his religion. He was a man of the greatest integrity, and had gained the esteem of the King, and of the highest personages in the realm. Dr. Talbot, then vicar of St. Giles, Reading, had for some years itinerated for Lady Huntingdon, preached in her various chapels, and associated with her ministers. Her Ladyship had a high opinion of his talents and integrity; and intrusted to him the difficult task of consulting with Lord Dartmouth. He thus communicated to her the result of his interview:—

"I have had a long conference with my Lord Dartmouth, who is ready and willing to do anything your Ladyship may direct. He feels his inability for a work so great, but humbly hopes the Lord will strengthen his hand, if you should think proper to repose the trust in him. He is delicate of writing, lest he should appear to dictate. Messrs. Madan, Stillingfleet, Romaine, and Downing, are of opinion that his Lordship is the fittest person for this great cause. How have we wrestled with God on your behalf! prayer-meetings have been frequently held at his Lordship's house, and the most importunate supplications have been poured forth before the throne of the great Shepherd and Head of his Church and people to spare his heritage in this ungodly land, and raise your Ladyship up again to be a nursing-mother to the Church of Christ. 'Spare thy people, O, God! and spare thy servant, we beseech thee!' has been the perpetual cry of our hearts in this season of suspense and deepest anguish; and I trust our prayers will be heard for his great name's sake. To him we commit your Ladyship, and his cause and interest in the land, with which you are so identified."

To the unspeakable joy of her numerous friends, Lady Huntingdon's disorder began rapidly to abate; and she was at length pronounced by her physicians out of danger. For some weeks, however, she remained exceedingly weak, and depressed in spirits. Whitefield visited her early in December, and wrote to Mr. Shirley in Ireland on the 8th, "The news (that you intend to visit England next spring) rejoiced me before I left town, and was most grateful to our good Lady Huntingdon, whom I have the honour of waiting upon at this time in Bath. She has been sick, nigh unto death, but through mercy is now somewhat recovered, though as yet unable to write much. This her Ladyship much regrets on your account; and, therefore, enjoins me to inform your whole self that your letter did not reach her hands, till many weeks after the proper time; that ever since she has been visited with lingering sickness, but begs you will not linger in coming over to our Macedonia to help us. The thought of it seems to refresh her heaven-born soul. Blessed be God, her Ladyship still takes the lead."

Death passed over Lady Huntingdon this time, but attacked and carried off the father of her friend and companion, Lady Ann Erskine. Lord Buchan had been for a considerable time in a declining state of health, and his disorder baffled the skill of his physicians. The circumstances attending his decease were highly consoling to his afflicted family. His long intimacy with pious persons in Scotland had prepared his mind for the reception of those great and important truths, with which he became acquainted through Lady Huntingdon, and the junior members of the Hawkestone family. He was a most regular attendant at her Ladyship's chapel, whenever his health permitted, and received much light and joy from the ministrations of the holy men who officiated there. A few days before his death, the Countess went to see him at his particular request. The interview was deeply affecting. Her Ladyship realized how near she had been brought to the verge of the grave, and was thus able most thoroughly to sympathize with his condition. As soon as he could speak, he said, "I have no foundation of hope whatever, but in the sacrifice of the Son of God; I have no where else to look; nothing else to depend upon for eternal life and salvation; and my confidence in Him is as firm as a rock." In his last moments, he retained the same happy confidence; and welcomed the approach of death with a holy smile. His heart was filled with joy; he seemed to realize a foretaste of the bliss that awaited him. Like the aged patriarch, Jacob he gathered his children around him, and blessed them: and solemnly added, "Yea, and they shall be blessed." His soul was filled with the love of Christ. He once said "Had I strength of body, I would not be ashamed before men and angels to tell what the Lord Jesus hath done for my soul. Come, Holy Ghost! Come, Holy Ghost! Happy, happy, happy—." Thus with the sounds of glory quivering on his dying lips, he entered into his rest, December 1st, 1767, in the fifty-eighth year of his age. Lady Huntingdon says, "I have witnessed the dismissal of many from the burden of mortality, but I have seldom seen an end more satisfactory, more solidly happy, or more triumphant. Thanks, unceasing thanks to Him who hath, in his infinite goodness, blessed the preaching of the word in the house which he hath enabled me to build, to record the glories of his name, and the wonders of his redemption; and attended the labours of his vile and unprofitable servant with the benediction of his Spirit! Not unto me, not unto me, O my God; but unto Thee, and to thy free and sovereign grace, be all the praise and glory!"

The impressive services, which took place at Bath, after the decease of the Earl, produced a profound sensation in the city. Though Lady Huntingdon was quite an invalid, she honoured the remains of her departed friend with a series of services, which cannot be better related than in Whitefield's own words. He says:—

"All hath been awful, and more than awful. On Saturday evening, before the corpse was taken from Buchan House, a word of exhortation was given, and a hymn sung in the room where the corpse lay. The young Earl stood with his hand on the head of the coffin; the Countess Dowager on his right hand, Lady Ann and Lady Isabella on his left, and their brother Thomas next to their mother, with Miss Orton, Miss Wheeler, and Miss Goddle on one side; all the domestics, with a few friends, on the other. The word of exhortation was received with great solemnity, and most wept under the parting prayer. At ten the corpse was removed to good Lady Huntingdon's chapel, where it was deposited within a place railed in for that purpose, covered with black baize, and the usual funeral concomitants, except escutcheons. On Sunday morning, all attended in mourning at early sacrament. They were seated by themselves at the foot of the corpse, and, with their head servants, received first, and a particular address was made to them. Immediately after receiving, the verses were sung for them;

"Our lives, our blood, we here present," &c.

"Then they received the blessing, and so returned to their places. Sacrament ended, and a blessed sacrament it was, the noble mourners returned to good Lady Huntingdon's house, which was lent them for the day. At eleven, public service began. The bereaved relations sat in order within, and the domestics around the outside of the rail. The chapel was more than crowded; near *three hundred* tickets, signed by the present Earl, were given out to the nobility and gentry to be admitted. All was hushed and solemn. Proper hymns were sung; and I preached on these words, 'I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, blessed are the dead that die in the Lord.' Attention sat on every face, and deep and almost universal impressions were made. The like scene, and if possible more solemn, was exhibited in the evening; and I was enabled to preach a second time, and a like power attended the word as in the morning. Ever since there hath been public service, and preaching twice a day. This is to be continued till Friday morning; then all is to be removed to Bristol, in order to be shipped for Scotland. For five days together we have been attending the house of mourning. Many, I trust, are obliged to say, 'How dreadful is this place!' Such a scene I never expect to see opened again on this side eternity. Congregations were very large, attentive, and deeply impressed. Surely the death of this noble Earl, thus improved, will prove the life of many. He had great foretastes of heaven; he cried 'Come Holy Ghost!' He came, and filled him with joy unspeakable. 'Happy, happy' were his last dying words. All surviving relations still feel the influence; they sit round the corpse, attended by their domestics and supporters, twice a day. Two sermons every day; life and power attend the word; and I verily believe many dead souls have been made to hear the voice of the Son of God."

CHAPTER XV. A.D. 1767—1768.

LADY HUNTINGDON'S COLLEGE AT TREVECCA.—PLAN OF ADMISSION.—LETTERS OF FLETCHER RESPECTING IT.—THE COUNTESS AT BATH.—HER TRIALS.—JOHN BERRIDGE.—DISPUTES RESPECTING THE LIVING OF ALDWINCLE.—MR. KIMPTON.—MR. MADAN.—DR. HAWEIS.—LADY HUNTINGDON PURCHASES THE ADVOWSON.—HER CORRESPONDENCE.—PIETY AT OXFORD.—EXPULSION OF SIX STUDENTS OF ST. EDMUND'S HALL.—PAMPHLETS, "PIETAS OXONIENSIS."—THE COUNTESS PREPARES HER COLLEGE.

EVERY year Lady Huntingdon was enlarging the sphere of her usefulness, and multiplying her laborious efforts. Her enterprising mind was constantly devising new plans to secure the glory of God, and benefit her fellow creatures. Her desires for the spiritual welfare of the nation were insatiable; the gaol she had reached formed but the starting point for a fresh prize; and the blessings which fell copiously around her only stimulated her ardent soul to crave after a still larger supply. She cast her eyes around, and saw the fields ready for the harvest; she daily received invitations from large and populous cities to bring the gospel into spots where Satan reigned; but, alas! her faithful labourers were few, and their pressing engagements scarcely permitted them to supply the chapels she had already erected. She could not, however, settle down satisfied with what she had already achieved; her peculiar situation stimulated the mighty powers of her mind and heart; and she determined to strike out in a bold and untrodden path, and rear an institution which should train young men for the ministry, and enable her not only to respond to the many *calls* for assistance, but to send preachers into all parts of England—to convey the gospel to the deluded Irish—to strengthen the hands of Occum in his labours among the Indians—and to proclaim the message of mercy to many savage tribes of the earth.

The grand thought took a deep hold upon her affections; she pondered it with great seriousness of mind; and anxiously looked out for a locality which would be adapted to the purpose. During the year 1767 the plan was gradually ripening in her mind, and assuming a tangible form. The Countess remembered the lovely spot in Wales, where she had spent many delightful days, in the midst of a warm and affectionate people. Trevecca House, in the parish of Talgarth, South Wales, was a fine old mansion, supposed to be part of an ancient castle, built in the reign of Henry II; and could easily be converted into a commodious college, where, under the fostering influence of devoted tutors, many young men might be fitted for the work of the ministry. She, therefore, visited Trevecca, for the purpose of ascertaining the eligibility of the premises, and made arrangements with Howell Harris for the purchase of the House.

Lady Huntingdon deeply felt the importance of the step she was taking, and resolved to do nothing rashly. She entertained just and liberal views of the qualifications, which candidates for the sacred office should possess. Fervent and genuine piety was first and indispensable. There could be no fitness for the ministry where that was wanting. Splendid talents, fine genius, commanding oratory, and wonderful energy could never compensate for the absence of sympathy with the doctrines taught, love of the virtues inculcated, and holy compassion for the souls to be saved. She would, therefore, admit into her College none but those whose piety and consistent conduct had been prominently displayed. She, however, knew too well the arduous duties of the ministry, to suppose that real piety could supply *all* its demands. There must be an adaptation to the work; a power of mind to grapple with difficulties—a patient perseverance to investigate truth—a wise discretion to regulate all efforts—an indomitable zeal and untiring energy—and a peculiar talent of imparting instruction to others. The education she wished to give to her students was intended to draw out the powers of their mind, to strengthen their habits of thought, to direct them how to employ their gifts to the greatest advantage, to lead them into the temple of learning, and incite their curiosity to investigate its recesses; and at the same time to foster their piety and zeal by employing them in their Master's service.

During her residence at Bath, the thoughts of the Countess were constantly directed to the establishment of the College at Trevecca; and she frequently wrote to Mr. Fletcher, and others respecting it, and submitted to them the plan which she had drawn up when at Kippax in Yorkshire. She proposed to admit only such as were truly converted to God, and wished to dedicate themselves to his service; that the term of residence should extend over three years; during which time, the students were to be educated, and to have all the necessaries of life, and a suit of clothes once a year, free of expense; and at the expiration of their course, they were *expected* to labour in those localities where the Countess desired their services; though, if they requested it, they were to be permitted to enter the Established Church. Lady Huntingdon had a high opinion of the piety, learning, and ability of Mr. Fletcher, and she invited him to become the President of her College. She did not expect him to reside there, as his duties at Madeley would not have permitted it; but he was to attend as regularly as he could; to give advice respecting the appointment of tutors, and admission of students; to overlook their studies and conduct, assist their piety, and judge of their qualifications for the work of the ministry. Mr. Fletcher most cordially approved the plan, and felt sure that the Institution would prove a great blessing to the Church of Christ; he, therefore, readily complied with her Ladyship's invitation, and accepted the office she had proposed to confer upon him. He received no salary, or reward; but entered on his labours from the sole motive of being useful in the important work of training young men for the glorious work of preaching the gospel.

When the plan, for the examination of the young men, who might be deemed proper candidates for admission into the College, was drawn up, and approved by Whitefield, Romaine, Venn, and Wesley; it was forwarded by Lady Huntingdon to all the ministers, with whom she had any acquaintance or connection; with the request that they would assist her in the choice of suitable persons for the work of the ministry. In reply, Mr. Fletcher sent a letter to her Ladyship, dated Madeley, November 24th, 1767, in which he says:—

"I have received the proposals which your Ladyship has drawn up for the examination of the young men, who may appear proper candidates for the Trevecca academy, and gratefully acknowledge your kindness in allowing me to propose suitable subjects out of my parish. Our Israel is small, my Lady, and if among six hundred thousand, only two faithful men were found of old, the Joshuas and Calebs cannot be numerous among us. After having perused the articles, and looked round about me, I designed to answer your Ladyship, that *out of this Galilee ariseth no prophet.* With this resolution I went to bed, but in my sleep was much taken up with the thought and remembrance of one of my young colliers, who told me some months ago, that for four years he had been inwardly persuaded he should be called to speak for God. I looked upon the unusual impression of my dream as a call to speak to the young man, and at waking designed to do so at the first opportunity. To my great surprise he came to Madeley that very morning, and I found upon inquiry he had been as much drawn to come, as I to speak to him. This encouraged me to speak to him of your Ladyship's design; and I was satisfied, by his conversation, that I might venture to propose him to your Ladyship for further examination. His name is *James Glazebrook*, collier and getter of ironstone in Madeley Wood. He is now twenty-three, by look nineteen; he has been awakened seven years; he has been steady from the beginning of his profession, at least so far as to be kept outwardly unblamable, but seemed to me to walk mostly in heaviness. What I told him was as oil put into a glimmering lamp, and he seems to revive upon hearing of the little outward call. Notwithstanding his strong desire to exhort, he never attempted it yet; and his not being forward to run of himself, makes me have the better hope his call is from God. He hath no mean gift in singing and prayer; his judgment and sense are superior to his station; and he does not seem, at least in the prospect, to be discouraged by the severest part of your Ladyship's proposals. One difficulty stood in the way; he maintains by his labour his aged mother; but this is made easy by his mother's leave and the promise of an elder son to maintain her, if he can but have his brother's place in the pit.

With regard to the superintendency of the College, or the examination of the candidates, I know myself too well to dream about it; nevertheless, so far as my present calling and poor abilities will allow, I am ready to throw my mite into the treasury that your Ladyship may find in other persons."

Early in January 1768, Mr. Fletcher was appointed President, and the Rev. Joseph Easterbrook, afterwards vicar of the parish of Temple in the city of Bristol, head master of the College. Mr. Fletcher wrote to Lady Huntingdon on the course of training to be adopted; and though the curriculum presents a very imperfect aspect, when compared with the present range of studies, it was far superior, *for the grand end in view*, to what could then be obtained in the national universities to prepare for ministerial labours. He says:—

"I thank your Ladyship for having recommended to me Easterbrook; I hope he will be the captain of the school, and a great help to the master, as well as a spur to the students. He hath good parts, a most happy memory, and a zeal that would gladden your Ladyship's heart. He has preached no less than four times to-day; and seems, indeed, in his own element when he is seeking after the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He is employed every evening in the work of the Lord; and I give him the more opportunity to exercise his talent, as it appears he does it far better than I. I beg two things for him; first, that it may hold; secondly, that he may be kept humble. He would at first live upon potatoes and water; but finding it may impair his health, I have got him to table with me, and shall gladly pay his board: he works for me, and the workman is worthy of his hire.

Our young collier seems a little discouraged with regard to the hopes of his being admitted one of your students; he thinks he stands no chance, if all must be qualified as he* is. With regard to books, I am in doubt what to write to your Ladyship. Having studied abroad (Geneva,) and used rather foreign than English books with my pupils, I am not acquainted with the books Great Britain affords, well enough to select the *best* and most *concise.* Besides, a plan of studies must be fixed upon first, before proper books can be chosen. Grammar, Logic, Rhetoric, with Ecclesiastical History, and a little Natural Philosophy, and Geography, with a great deal of practical Divinity, will be sufficient for those who do not care to dive into languages. Mr. Townsend and Charles Wesley might, by spending an hour together, make a proper choice; and I would recommend them not to forget Watts' Logic, and his History of the Bible by questions and answers, which seem to me excellent books of the kind for clearness and order. Mr. Wesley's Natural Philosophy contains as much as is wanted, or more. Mason's Essay on Pronunciation will be worth their attention. Henry and Gill on the Bible, with the four volumes of Baxter's practical works, Keach's Metaphors, Taylor on the Types (printed at Trevecca,) Gurnal's Christian Armour, Edwards on Preaching, Johnson's English Dictionary, and Mr. Wesley's Christian Library, may make part of the little library. The book of Baxter, I mention, I shall take care to send to Trevecca, as a mite towards the collection, together with Usher's Body of Divinity, Scapula's Greek Lexicon, and Lyttleton's Latin Dictionary.

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* **Easterbrook.**

With regard to those who propose to learn Latin and Greek, the master, your Ladyship will appoint, may choose to follow his particular method. Mr. Wesley's books, printed for the use of Christian youths, seem to me short and proper; and their expense less, which I suppose should be consulted. Two or three dictionaries of Bailey or Dyke, for those who learn English, with two or three Cole's Dictionaries, Schrevelius's and Pasor's, for those who will learn Latin and Greek, may be a sufficient stock at first."

While Lady Huntingdon was making these preparations for establishing her College in Wales, she was busily engaged in the midst of a large and fashionable circle at Bath. The services connected with the funeral of the Earl of Buchan had impressed many with the conviction of their mortality; and her Ladyship was anxious to prevent these impressions passing away like the early dew. The young Earl came forward and boldly declared his faith in the Lord Jesus, and by the advice of Lady Huntingdon appointed Messrs. Venn, Berridge, and Fletcher his chaplains. His open avowal of religion drew upon him the sneers and reproaches of his former companions; but he stood as firm as a rock against the torrents of sarcasm which dashed against him, and manfully fought the good fight of faith. The health of Lady Huntingdon was far from established, and her constitution frequently indicated increasing frailty, and decay. At the commencement of the year 1768, she experienced an almost total loss of appetite. Every remedy was tried to recruit her strength; the ablest physicians were constant in their attendance upon her; yet she lingered in great prostration of body. The ardent workings of her soul, and her deep anxiety to do good, were too powerful for her weak frame to endure; and yet it was impossible for her to give up her efforts, or relinquish her plans. A life of ease or inactivity was incompatible with her nature; her soul was touched with pity towards a benighted world, and glowed with divine enthusiasm; and she felt that as long as one spark of life remained in her body, it should be employed to animate the servants of Christ, and, like the star of Bethlehem, to direct the world to the Saviour. Her Ladyship had also many outward trials to depress her spirit; and though she was still spared, she saw many of her beloved friends removed from her. At the commencement of this year, she was called to part with two near and dear relatives, the Hon. John Shirley, brother to Washington, Earl Ferrars, and her aunt Lady Stewarta Shirley, sister to Lady Fanny. The sorrow of the Countess was mitigated by the consolations of divine grace. She could commit the pious dead to the custody of the grave in sure and certain hope; and though natural affection caused the tear to fall, and the sigh to heave the bosom, faith pointed to Him who regulates all affairs, and whispered to her heart, "Be still, and know that I am God." In all her trials, Lady Huntingdon recognised the tender hand of her heavenly Father. She was conscious that the chastisement was needed, and that it was sent to her for wise and benevolent purposes. The clouds gathered too thickly around her for her now to discern the end; but she felt assured that, when she had passed the night of her existence, and reached the eternal day, she would be able to ascertain how much love and mercy even the blackest cloud had conveyed to her. She enjoyed the presence of Christ in her afflictions; his voice thrilled her heart, like the sweet tones of music; his hand wiped the tears from her cheeks; his smiles restored tranquility, and, like sunbeams, beautified the heart; and when she experienced the boundless blessings he had scattered upon her soul, she could lift up her eyes to heaven, and exclaim,

> "My God, the spring of all my joys,
> The life of my delights;
> The glory of my brightest days,
> And comfort of my nights."

The illness and bereavements of Lady Huntingdon did not divert her from the great business of her life. The affairs of her chapels demanded her constant attention, and the extensive itinerancy she maintained in various parts of the country involved a voluminous correspondence. When prostrated by sickness, she felt the value of her companion, Lady Ann Erskine; whose kindness and assistance proved a great comfort to the Countess. Through her, she corresponded with various ministers to supply her chapels, and managed the affairs of her enterprise. She wrote to Mr. Berridge and invited him to supply the pulpit at Bath; and in a curious letter to her Ladyship, this eccentric preacher declines the honour, because, he says, he has been whipped pretty severely for fighting out of his proper regiment and for rambling out of his bounds, and that while the smart of the rod remains on his back, it will weigh more with him than a thousand arguments. He gives a striking picture of what his assistant would have to endure, if he left his own work. He says:—

"I fear my weekly circuits would not suit a London or a Bath divine, nor any tender Evangelist that is environed with prunello. Long rides and miry roads in sharp weather! Cold houses to sit in with very moderate fuel, and three or four children roaring or rocking about you! Coarse food, lumpy beds to lie on, and too short for the feet; stiff blankets, like boards, for a covering; and live cattle in plenty to feed upon you! Rise at five in the morning to preach; at seven, breakfast on tea that smells very sickly; at eight, mount a horse, with boots never cleaned, and then ride home, praising God for all mercies. Sure I must stay till your academy is completed, before I can have an assistant."

Mr. Berridge, however, recommended to Lady Huntingdon the Rev. Matthew Powley, vicar of Dewsbury, Yorkshire, a man of superior talents and distinguished piety, who preached to large audiences at Bath, and was made the means of impressing many with the necessity of a change of heart. Her Ladyship was highly delighted with his ministry, and followed his energetic appeals to the conscience, with prayer for the divine blessing.

In the beginning of March, important business required the presence of the Countess in London. Mr. Kimpton, who had held the living of Aldwincle in Northamptonshire for many years, became involved in difficulties by his imprudent conduct, and was imprisoned in the King's Bench. As the Bishop would not permit him to transfer his living to some clergyman for a limited time, and he was unable immediately to meet with a purchaser, to prevent it falling into the Bishop's hands, he presented it, through Mr. Madan, to Dr. Haweis, whom he had never previously seen. Some months after, a gentleman offered Mr. Kimpton one thousand guineas for the advowson; he therefore immediately applied to Dr. Haweis either to resign the living, or to give him some compensation for it. As no such stipulations had been made to Messrs. Madan and Haweis, when the presentation was drawn up, they refused to yield. This caused the greatest distress to Mr. Kimpton, who was still a prisoner, and whose family was nearly starving. The affair soon became public, and the bitterest aspersions were cast upon the characters of Dr. Haweis and Mr. Madan. Mr. Kimpton admitted that no previous stipulations had been entered into, but urged that his circumstances were well known to them; that when he presented the living to Dr. Haweis, he relied solely on his honour; and that it could never have been expected that he was willing to relinquish absolutely his living to an entire stranger, who was likely to enjoy it for a number of years, when he could have found many at an advanced age to whom it might have been presented. Mr. Madan considered that he had acted in an honourable manner towards Mr. Kimpton, and sought the highest legal advice upon the matter. The Lord Chancellor, Lord Apsley, to whom he was chaplain, decided in his favour; still his name was publicly blackened, and his character maligned by the statements which were published. Much recrimination and bitterness was manifested on both sides; and the pamphlets which appeared only increased the public ferment.

Lady Huntingdon was deeply grieved at witnessing the scandal which this affair had brought upon religion, and she hastened to London to see what measures could be devised to hush the strife. After a long consultation with Whitefield, Thornton, and others, her purchase of the advowson was considered the best means of removing the obloquy, from the Christian church; and at the same time of assisting the poor sufferers, and of relieving Dr. Haweis and Mr. Madan from their unfortunate position. On the 1st of March, 1768, Lady Huntingdon accordingly sent to Mr. Thornton, by Whitefield, a draft for *one thousand pounds*, and commissioned them, with the Rev. S. Brewer, to purchase the perpetual advowson, of Aldwincle, and deliver Mr. Kimpton and his family out of their difficulties and distress. In her letter to Mr. Thornton she requests that it may be stated that the step is taken without any understanding with Mr. Madan, that no public notice of her deed should be made, and that even Mr. Kimpton should not know the source whence the money came. "Gratitude to me would exceedingly hurt me under any form whatever. My heart feels too much ashamed before Him who sees it, to receive any approbation from man." Lord Dartmouth had taken an active part in this controversy; and when aware of the generous intention of Lady Huntingdon, he expressed his anxiety lest the characters of Dr. Haweis and Mr. Madan should suffer by it. Her Ladyship, therefore, wrote a letter to him informing him of what she had done, and stating that, though he had looked at the affair in a tender and charitable light, the world had seen it through a different medium; and that, therefore, it was necessary to remove the cause of the offence, that the characters of his friends might be completely vindicated. She also wrote that same day to Mr. Madan, for whom she had a high regard, and candidly explained her sentiments, and her reasons for the part she had taken in the transaction. She stated that she had, from the first, held the opinion that she could not see how Dr. Haweis could, as a honest man, keep the living; and that the suspicion of simony in giving it up might easily be avoided by proving, before the Bishop, in the presence of Mr. Kimpton, themselves free from any such thing. She reminded Mr. Madan that nearly a year before, she had stated her disapprobation of their proceedings, but had maintained a strict silence on the question; when, however, matters had reached their climax, and religion was openly maligned, she determined to step in, and remove the evil by purchasing the living. She recommended him with Dr. Haweis to make a public apology for any weakness or wrong impressions manifested, and thus to restore peace and happiness to all concerned.

Throughout this unfortunate affair, the part which Lady Huntingdon had acted, redounds much to her honour; and displays her keen jealousy for the unsullied glory of Christ, her generosity towards the sufferers, and her strength of mind and determination of purpose. Though sincerely attached to Dr. Haweis and Mr. Madan, and with everything to bias her judgment in their favour, she formed her own opinion of the transaction, and acted as she deemed right. Her conduct on this occasion did not prevent the co-operation of these zealous ministers in her Ladyship's service. Their piety was undoubted; God crowned their labours with great success; and Dr. Haweis became one of her devisees, and the chief manager of her chapels after the decease of Lady Erskine.

While Lady Huntingdon was at Bath, her attention was drawn to the evidences of piety which were manifested by many of the students at the universities. The Cambridge band was headed by Rowland Hill, whose whole soul was engaged in promoting the growth of religion among his friends. At the head of the Oxford band was Mr. Halward, a constant correspondent of Mr. Hill, who assembled his little company at the house of Whitefield's friend, Mrs. Durbridge, for prayer and religious conversation. Among them were the six students of St. Edmund's Hall, who were expelled from the university; Benjamin Kay, Thomas Jones, Thomas Grove, Erasmus Middleton, Joseph Shipman, and Matthews. This meeting created a great excitement in the city. Dr. Stillingfleet, then fellow of Merton College, and a cherished friend of Lady Huntingdon, had been accustomed to meet them at Mrs. Durbridge's house, where he read and prayed with them, and invited them to do likewise. Their unusual piety, and their zealous efforts at expounding in private houses, and preaching in the neighbourhood, excited the jealousy of the clergy, and provoked the ridicule of the gay gownsmen. An officious tutor of St. Edmund's Hall, Mr. Higson, complained of these students to the Principal, Dr. Dixon, and spoke of them as "Enthusiasts, who talked of inspiration, regeneration, and drawing nigh to God." The worthy Doctor was thoroughly acquainted with the views and pure lives of the accused students, and refused to entertain the charge made against them. Higson, therefore, appealed to the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Durrell, who summonded a special conclave, appointed assessors, and cited the offending students before him on Friday, March 11th, 1768. Several heads of houses warmly espoused. the cause of the students, especially Dr. Dixon, who, as Principal of the Hall, bore direct testimony to their exemplary conduct and piety, and defended their doctrines by appealing to the Thirty-nine Articles. His efforts, however, were unavailing; the sentence of expulsion was passed; and the Vice-Chancellor, in summing up, exclaimed, "I, therefore, by my visitorial power do hereby pronounce them expelled!" The event speedily created a great stir abroad, which the daily papers increased by the prominence they gave to the circumstances of the case. Whitefield immediately addressed a letter to the Vice-Chancellor, written in his most forcible style; Sir Richard Hill wrote his famous pamphlet called *"Pietas Oxoniensis,"* and dedicated it to the Chancellor of the university, the Earl of Lichfield; Dr. Horne, afterwards Bishop of Norwich, ably defended the students; and others severely lashed the members of the conclave for their unjust sentence. Lady Huntingdon watched the progress of these events with considerable anxiety. She had been for some time acquainted with some of the students, and had received from Whitefield the account of their proceedings. Her name was associated with them in a very curious manner. In the public journals she was accused of seducing young men from their trade or avocation, sending them to the university, maintaining them there at her expense, and at length smuggling them into holy orders. Lady Huntingdon cared little for the ridicule of the world, but was justly indignant at the conduct of the university authorities, for expelling these young men because their piety shone conspicuously in a dark age of the Church. In the following letter, her Ladyship gives free expression to her sentiments on the whole affair :

"It is a grevious thing to find men, who have solemnly subscribed to the doctrines of the Reformation, acting with such inconsistent cruelty, tyranny, falsehood, and scurrility towards those who conscientiously adhere to the tenets of our excellent Church, and endeavour to propagate her principles. Such conduct on the part of our Church-rulers and the heads of the universities, is a sad blow to the Church to which they profess to belong, and strengthens the hands of our Popish adversaries. Of what solemn perjury are those men guilty, who for the sake of filthy lucre and creeping into high places, swear to the belief of doctrines and principles, which, in their hearts, they disbelieve and detest? How the Great Head of the Church will be avenged on such people as these, and how he will reward their fidelity, a future day will disclose to the view of an assembled world! O, my soul, come not thou into the secrets of such men With the foul invectives of common newspapers I have nothing to do; neither am I accountable for the impudent falsehood of those who have maliciously asserted that I have inveigled six ignorant young men from their trades in the country, and maintained them at the University. All these, and many other absurd ridiculous accusations, insinuation, and statements, are utterly false, and without any, the least, foundation of truth to support them; but the Lord God is witness between me and my accusers in this matter; and woe unto them that call good evil, and evil good; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness. Dr. Nowell seems to be of opinion, that the expulsion of the students 'is a seasonable interposition, and has disappointed the hopes of those who were desirous of filling the church with their votaries.' Bold assertion often supplies the place of truth with some men. May the Lord pardon him for the unjust part he has acted in this affair, and convince him that his conduct, and that of the other members of the University, has been utterly inconsistent with every sentiment of truth, justice, conscience, religion, humanity, and candour." *

This tyrannical oppression only stimulated the zeal of the Countess, and determined her speedily to open her own College, as an asylum for some of these persecuted students, and a nursery for the Church. In the beginning of May, she repaired to Tunbridge Wells, where she made the necessary arrangements for opening that Institution in the following August. She saw that the persecuting spirit of the age was forcing her to depend more upon her own efforts: and she probably discerned that the time would not be far distant when she would have to look to her own College for a supply of faithful labourers, whom she wished to employ in all parts of the country.

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* Life and Times, &c., Vol. I., p. 426.

CHAPTER XVI. A.D. 1768—1769.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS.—DEATH OF LADY MARGARET INGHAM. WHITEFIELD.—TWO EXPELLED STUDENTS AND LORD HUNTINGDON.—ANECDOTES.—THE COLLEGE AT TREVECCA OPENED.—THE STUDENTS; THEIR STUDIES, ZEAL, AND LABOURS.—LETTER OF JOHN BERRIDGE.—LADY HUNTINGDON IN LONDON.—PAINFUL REMINISCENCES.—BOOTH'S "REIGN OF GRACE."—THE COUNTESS AT BATH. A REMEDY FOR SICK MINISTERS.—REV. DR. DE COURCY. —OPENING OF LADY HUNTINGDON'S CHAPEL AT TUNBRIDGE WELLS.

In the month of May 1768, Lady Huntingdon procured a permanent residence in that part of Tunbridge Wells called Mount Ephraim. She had scarcely entered her new abode, before she received the intelligence of the death of Lady Margaret Ingham. Her Ladyship was in her sixty-eighth year, and had been gradually declining, though not so as to arouse the fears of her friends. She had spent a life of great activity and usefulness, and had energetically aided the efforts of her devoted husband. Her character was adorned with the loveliest Christian graces, and her influence was felt and acknowledged by a large circle of friends. When she was evidently sinking, Mrs. Medhurst and Miss Wheeler repaired to Aberford, and remained there till her decease. Her closing days were peaceful and happy. She suffered but little, and gently declined till she was called away. It was a pleasure to attend her, and witness her decay. Her cheeks were flushed, her eyes retained their peculiar lustre, her voice, though weak, was melodious, and her smiles threw a charm around her features which enraptured the beholders. Like an aged leaf on which autumn has pencilled his glorious tints, she was fading into beauty, and waiting for the heavenly breath to waft her to the skies. At length the hour arrived; and with expiring energy she exclaimed, "Thanks be to God! the moment's come, the day is dawning;" and her joyful spirit fled from its earthly abode, April 30th, 1768. Mr. Ingham survived her only four years. His constitution was completely shattered by his active labours, and the troubles which had befallen his societies. A deep melancholy settled upon his mind; his spirits were either very highly excited or unduly depressed; and he often indulged the fear that he should be eternally lost. Lady Huntingdon and his friends made every attempt to rally and cheer him, and their letters were of great benefit to him; but, at length he sank under the weight of his troubles, and entered into his rest. He was a remarkable person, and the means of doing great good. He was handsome in his appearance, gentlemanly in his deportment, animated in his address, and a model of Christian character. He was exceedingly generous in his liberality, and defrayed the expenses of most of his preachers, from his private resources. Yorkshire is indebted to Mr. Ingham for the revival of real religion throughout the county.

Towards the end of May, Lady Huntingdon received at Tunbridge Wells a visit from Whitefield, on his way to Lewes and Brighton. The arrangements were then drawn up respecting the opening of the College in Wales; and Whitefield, during his stay, preached twice in the open air. The congregations were very large, and many were deeply impressed with the truth. The Countess was watching the movements of Providence, and was greatly encouraged by the disposition of the people to hear the Gospel. She says, "Such happy indications of the approbation of God induce me to hope that He will deign to smile on my humble efforts for the glory of His great name, and the good of the people of this place, and ultimately crown them with distinguished success." Shortly after Whitefield left, Mr. Shipman and Mr. Matthews, two of the students expelled from Oxford, paid Lady Huntingdon a visit at Tunbridge Wells, with the view of obtaining admission into her College. They were most cordially received by her Ladyship, and remained for some time under her hospitable roof.

One evening, Lord Huntingdon, who was then staying with the Countess, wished to have some conversation with these students; and said to his mother, "I should like to know the motives of these young men, why they expose themselves to censure, and the loss of preferment." The Countess replied, "This evening, after supper, I will leave the room, and you shall have an opportunity of discoursing with them separately." She contrived that Mr. Shipman, who was most ready in conversation, should be first alone with his Lordship. Lord Huntingdon, among other questions relative to his sentiments, particularly asked him his views respecting the authenticity of the Holy Scriptures, as his Lordship was well versed in deistical objections to Christianity. The young man was considerably confused, and felt very incompetent to give satisfactory replies. Thus this interview closed; and shortly after, an opportunity was given for conversation with the other student. Mr. Matthews was remarkably diffident, and so wanting in the gift of utterance, that after a short trial of his ministerial abilities, he entered upon secular pursuits. Lord Huntingdon interrogated him respecting his principles, and the cause of his late conduct at Oxford. He replied by very simply and fully relating the whole of God's dealings with his soul. His Lordship's attention was riveted, and his mind so astonished with the simple narrative that he urged no objections, but when the young man had finished, he thanked him for his information, and observed that he had no doubt he was a very good man. Lady Huntingdon shortly after inquired of her son what opinions he had formed of the young men. He said, "I like the last best. Taking the first upon my own ground, I could combat him tolerably well; but the latter has been in paths to which I am a stranger. I have no doubt he is an honest and good man." When his Lordship was on his dying-bed, he inquired after Mr. Matthews; which showed the impression made on his heart by the narration of what the religion of Jesus Christ had effected.

Having candidates for the Christian ministry in her house, the Countess thought it proper to arrange some preaching engagements. She publicly announced that on a certain evening there would be preaching in front of her house; though she did not make known her intentions to her Oxford guests. The time arrived; and a goodly company assembled around her door. One of the students then asked her Ladyship what these things meant. She replied, "I have two preachers in my house, and these people have come to hear a sermon; it is expected that one of you will preach." They both expressed their surprise, and informed her that they had never preached, but merely expounded the word of God, and that they were too timid to attempt it now. Lady Huntingdon addressed Mr. Shipman, and said she must then insist on his informing the people that he was afraid to trust God to assist him in addressing them. At this time he was in the hall, and the servant ready to open the front door; and her Ladyship placed a Bible in his hands, ordered the servant to throw the door open, and gently pushed him forward, and said, "The Lord be with you." Standing on the top of the flight of steps, he opened the book, and selected his text. "My spirit shall not always strive with man." Gen. vi, 3. He spoke of the wickedness of man, the patience and forbearance of God, and the danger of abusing it; and closed with presenting Jesus Christ as the only refuge from the deluge of the coming wrath. This discourse was blessed to the conversion of a man whose name was Crandal, who became the oldest disciple in the society at Tunbridge Wells, and a most honourable member till his death. Finding that her young guest could preach so well, the Countess arranged another service, when Mr. Shipman again preached; and on this occasion, the Lord was pleased to call the wife of Crandal out of darkness into his marvellous light. Mr. Shipman afterwards entered the College at Trevecca, and became a bold preacher of the gospel, in the most public parts of England, both in churches and in the open-air.

In the summer of 1768, Lady Huntingdon took a journey into Sussex, where, says Romaine, "her only view is to carry glad tidings to a wretchedly ignorant people. The Lord has hitherto prospered her design, and while he smiles upon it, I believe she will never give it up." She was accompanied by the Rev. W. Talbot, of Reading, who preached wherever he had an opportunity; and after a short stay at Brighton, she set out for Wales to realize her long-cherished hope of preparing an Evangelical ministry.

At length the auspicious day arrived, when the College was to be opened for the reception of the students, and the adjoining chapel for the preaching of the gospel. It was most appropriately chosen; for on that day, Wednesday, August 24th, 1768, Lady Huntingdon entered on her sixty-second year, in the possession of vigorous powers of mind, and recruited bodily strength. It had been anticipated for some weeks, and on the previous day and during the night numbers poured into Trevecca from all parts. A vast company assembled in the morning to witness the proceedings, to whom Whitefield preached with great power from the passage, "In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and bless thee." The next day he addressed the students in the College chapel; and on the following Sunday preached in the court-yard before the College to many thousand persons, from the text, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." He says, "What we have seen and felt at the College is unspeakable; we were favoured with gospel gales for several days."

The important business of the College was immediately commenced. Mr. Fletcher was the President, Mr. Easterbrook the Head Master, and Mr. Glazebrook the first Student proposed, and probably the first that entered. His career was singularly instructive, and indicates how a steady perseverance and upright conduct will lead to noble and beneficial ends. During his stay at the College, he studied very diligently, and was occasionally sent out to preach in different localities, where he became very popular. After itinerating for a short time, he applied to his noble patroness to procure him ordination in the Established Church. Mr. Fletcher gave him a title; and after three years' residence at the College, he was ordained by Dr. North in the diocese of Litchfield and Coventry, and laboured for many years with great success at Warrington. Lady Huntingdon manifested the greatest interest in his welfare till her death, and often corresponded with him.

The College was quickly filled with students, who formed a holy brotherhood, and fostered each other's piety, and stimulated each other's activity. They studied with unwearied diligence, and made considerable progress in literary attainments; though the frequent and urgent calls, which the Countess had for their labours, and the necessities of her own chapels, compelled her to send them forth to preach, before they had made much proficiency in language and sacred literature. The students were all young men of fervent piety, strong sense, and devoted to the service of Christ; and they received the approbation of their Master, when he made their first efforts at preaching successful in winning souls. They regularly rendered to the Countess an account of their labours; and their success awakened joy and gratitude in her breast, and stimulated her to persevere in her work. Her Ladyship frequently resided at the College, and exerted a mighty influence on its inmates. The house was the abode of peace and love; the spirit of devotion glowed in every heart; the studies were associated with prayer, and made subservient to the end contemplated; contentment and order pervaded all; and the rules of the Institution were cheerfully and rigidly adhered to. The example of the Countess was perhaps the most powerful instructor; and each soul panted after her spirit and piety. Like her, the students were mighty in prayer; and often a stranger could have heard in the lovely vale, the voice of supplication and praise proceeding from a little band of students, who were pouring out the desires of their hearts to God, in the surrounding woodlands.

The benefits of the College were first experienced in the immediate locality. The students were speedily sent out to scatter the seed of divine truth, while they were acquiring knowledge. The near villages were visited on foot; several horses were kept for the purpose of conveying preachers to distant places on Saturday afternoon; and gradually the whole country, within a circle of thirty miles, enjoyed every week the sound of the gospel. Their ministry was very acceptable to the people; there was a fire and freshness in their preaching which told powerfully on their hearers; their hearts were in sympathy with their work, and with the condition of the people; and their style was adapted to arouse the careless, and impress the sinner with his guilt. The sphere of their efforts gradually increased; from all parts of the country the cry was heard, "Come over and help us;" and the Countess was unwillingly obliged to reject many invitations. She was soon induced, by the urgent necessity of the case, to draw out plans for an extensive itinerancy, and to keep up a regular correspondence with her preachers; which involved a labour that, at her period of life, was truly astonishing, and to which her active spirit only was equal. Frequently a student was sent out to a great distance to preach in certain districts, or *rounds* as they were termed. On these occasions, chapels, private houses, market-places, and fields, as the circumstances required, became the scene of their labour; and by these means, the gospel was introduced, or religion revived, in many places where now there are flourishing churches and numerous hearers. A loud cry of *irregularity* was raised against their efforts, and many attempts were made to intimidate them; but they persevered in their work, and received the approbation of their divine Master. The times demanded just the agency which Lady Huntingdon brought into existence; the people were perishing for lack of knowledge; the organization of the Establishment failed to touch the mass of the people, because the clergy generally were negligent of their duties, and cared little for the salvation of souls; and the impartial verdict of history will honour the zeal and courage of the Countess in raising an Institution, which sent forth missionaries to all parts of the kingdom, and contributed, in no slight degree, to produce that state of efficiency and prosperity which now happily characterises the various sections of the Christian Church. From its commencement to the present time, the College of Lady Huntingdon has furnished some of the most devoted and useful ministers the Church of Christ can enumerate.

The Countess spent the winter of 1768 in London, and found ample opportunities for employing her talents in the metropolis, besides her usual correspondence with her ministers and students to regulate the supplies at her chapels. John Berridge at first disapproved of the establishment of the College, and before it was opened, said, "The soil you have chosen is proper; Welsh mountains afford a brisk air for a student; and the rules are excellent;—but I doubt the success of the project, and fear it will occasion you more trouble than all your other undertakings besides." After its successful trial, he changed his opinion, and in a letter, dated December 30th, says,

"I am glad to hear of the plentiful effusion from above on Talgarth. Jesus has now baptized your College, and thereby shown his approbation of the work. You may therefore rejoice, but rejoice with trembling. Faithful labourers may be expected from thence; but if it is Christ's College, a Judas will certainly be found amongst them. I believe the baptism will prove a lasting one, but I believe the sensible comfort will not last always, nor long. Neither is it convenient, in the present state of things; a winter is as much wanted, to continue the earth fruitful, as a summer. If the grass was always growing, it would soon grow to nothing; just as flowers, that blow much and long, generally blow themselves to death. And as it is thus with the ground, so is it with the labourers too. Afflictions, desertions, and temptations are as needful as consolations. * * * Jesus has given you a hand and a heart to execute great things for his glory, and, therefore, he will deal you out a suitable measure of afflictions, to keep your balance steady. Did Paul labour more abundantly than all his brethren? He had more abundant stripes than them all. The Master will always newshave your crown, before he puts a fresh coronet upon your head; and I expect to hear of a six months' illness, when I hear of the building of a new chapel. I cannot comfort you with saying, that I think your day is almost spent; but it is some encouragement to know that your noon is past, and that your afternoon shadows lengthen. Go on, my dear Lady; build and fight manfully, and believe lustily. Look upwards, and press forwards. Heaven's eternal hills are before you, and Jesus stands with arms wide open to receive you. One hour's sight and enjoyment of the Bridegroom in his place above will make you forget all your troubles on the way."

It is curious to notice that the Lord saw fit to send Lady Huntingdon affliction with almost every remarkable success. Shortly after her return to London, she caught a severe cold, which prostrated her strength, and confined her to her bed for a short time. Her affliction was aggravated by the pressure of business, and the severe anxiety she felt for the welfare of her congregation. Her town residence was at this time in Portland Row, Cavendish Square; a noble mansion, which was thrown open for the preaching of the gospel. The scenes of her early efforts were revived; and the nobility came in crowds to hear Whitefield, Wesley, and Romaine, who now cordially united to officiate at her Ladyship's and administer the sacrament. She could not help thinking of by-gone days; and as she surveyed the circle of her friends, and contrasted its present aspect with its former appearance, she was painfully reminded of many who had been cut off, and whose places were occupied by fresh hearers. The grace of God had spared her; the storms of trouble had raged fiercely around her, the lightning's flash hath scathed many a younger brow, and the rough waves of care and anxiety had overwhelmed some of the mighty; but she still stood stedfast, vigorous in the midst of decay, and active even while prostrated by weakness.

Lady Huntingdon was ever devising some new way in which she could glorify God, and serve her friends. If any of her ministers were ill, she wrote consoling letters, and invited them to Bath or Brighton to recruit their health. She thus wrote to Mr. Venn, and offered him her house at Bath, that the change of air, rest, and the waters might renew his strength; and she made great efforts to obtain the living of Ashby-de-la-Zouch for his curate, Mr. Ryland. Nor did she confine her benevolent exertions to her ministers. Mr. Venn introduced to her notice the Rev. Abraham Booth, pastor of a small Baptist Chapel in Nottinghamshire. He had composed a book entitled "*The Reign of Grace,*" which Mr. Venn perused in manuscript, and was so pleased with it that, by his recommendation, it was published and obtained a wide circulation. He wrote a letter to her Ladyship upon the subject, and stated that the author was very poor, had seven children, and had never been educated but by his own exertions. This was a proper object to call forth the sympathy of the Countess. As soon as the work was published, she procured a number of copies, which she distributed in every direction; and she also recommended the author to several of her Baptist friends in London. She wrote to Dr. Gifford, and sent him several copies, with the request that he would use his influence to promote the welfare of the writer. By this work, Mr. Booth was introduced to the congregation in Prescot street, Good-man's-fields, which was then destitute of a minister; whence he afterwards received a unanimous call, and was ordained pastor of the church, February 16th, 1769. Lady Huntingdon attended the service, and ever after maintained a friendly interourse with Mr. Brook.

Lady Huntingdon continued in London till the end of March, 1769. Whitefield was almost laid aside from his duties. He managed to come down to her house; but he was unable to take any active part in the usual services there. Wesley perceived a great change creeping over him. "His soul appears to be vigorous still, but his body is sinking apace." He, however, rallied; and was soon able again to preach to the noble circle around the Countess. Mr. Venn came to London in March, and spent most of his time at her residence, where he frequently officiated. He greatly enjoyed the society of her Ladyship and Whitefield; and before he left the metropolis, a special service was held in the drawing-room, which was attended by a brilliant circle of the nobility. The Countess prevailed upon him to visit a condemned criminal, the son of godly parents, in Ireland, with whom Mr. Shirley was well acquainted. In one of his letters, Mr. Venn says, "I am so much engaged in visiting a condemned man, twelve miles from town, that I fear I shall not be able to leave London before the end of three weeks. I think it long: but my friends are so kind, and make so much of my company, that I cannot refuse them. The man is chained to the floor whilst I am preaching to him." He continued his labours with the wretched man, and preached in the goal to a small company.

Towards the end of March, the Countess journeyed to Bath, with her family circle. A short time before her departure, she requested the Wesleys, as they were on their way to Bristol, to preach at her chapel. John Wesley then departed for Ireland; but his brother remained at Bath, and officiated in her Ladyship's chapel, and some of the houses of the nobility. Soon after her arrival, she was joined by Mr. Shrubsole, a well-known assistant of Whitefield, who resided with her, and zealously laboured to save souls. Whitefield had recovered from his recent illness, and resorted to his usual remedy for sickness—*itinerancy.* Before he set out, he wrote to the Rev. Walter Shirley, who had offered his services at the Tabernacle; and in his letter, dated April 1st, 1769, says, "Our Almighty Jesus knows how to build his temple in troublous times. His work prospers in the hands of the elect Countess, who is gone to Bath, much recovered from her late indisposition. Worthy Lady Fanny Shirley proposes soon to follow, in order to reside there. Some more Coronets, I hear, are likely to be laid at the Redeemer's feet. They glitter gloriously when set in and surrounded by *a crown of thorns*." He paid a short visit to Bath—and it was the last he was permitted to make—and then set off on an excursion to Bristol, Frome, Chippenham, Dursley, Rodborough, Gloucester and Cheltenham, where his spirit was revived with the glorious scenes he witnessed. To most of these places he was accompanied by the Countess and Lady Ann Erskine. His noble patroness then little thought that this was the last visit she was to pay to these spots in the company of her chaplain. He was fast ripening for glory; his sphere of activity would speedily be changed from earth to heaven; and soon the joyful welcome from his Master would greet him, and be re-echoed by the crowds of happy spirits, whom he had brought into the ways of eternal life.

At the end of May, Lady Huntingdon proceeded to Tunbridge Wells with Lady Ann, Lady Buchan, and Miss Orton, to arrange the opening of the chapel she had erected in that place. As her efforts had been greatly blessed, and the people were anxious to enjoy the preaching of her ministers, she procured a favourable spot of ground near her house, and erected a neat and commodious place of worship. She secured the services of her veteran chaplain, George Whitefield, and of a young Irish clergyman, who about this period was added to the roll of her honoured ministers. The Rev. Richard De Courcy was descended from an ancient and respectable family in Ireland, and had been educated at Trinity College, Dublin. At the age of twenty-three, he took his deacon's orders as curate to Mr. Shirley, and rapidly gained great popularity by his lively address, and commanding talents. On one occasion he was invited to preach in St. Andrew's Church, Dublin, where the fame of his oratory gathered a crowded congregation. While the prayers were being read, the pulpit was seized by order of the metropolitan, to prevent De Courcy preaching to the people. His ardent spirit could not thus tamely submit to be crushed by the order of one who cared nothing for the people; he, therefore, intimated his intention of preaching in the open-air, and immediately withdrew into the church-yard. He was followed by the congregation; and mounting a tombstone, the intrepid man boldly proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation to the excited audience. His zeal and spirit formed a strange contrast to what was manifested around him, and stirred up a host of malignant enemies. He had committed the unpardonable sin of daring to preach the gospel, and, therefore, experienced the heavy hand of episcopal rule. The Bishop was offended with him, and refused him a license and priest's orders. His courage, however, never for one moment forsook him; and though he was publicly insulted, and shut out from every hope of preferment, there were a few friends who admired his character, and rallied around him. When Mr. Shirley represented his case to Lady Huntingdon, she immediately applied to the Bishop of Lichfield to ordain him, and sent him an urgent invitation to come to England, and aid her in the great work in which she was engaged. He accordingly came to London, waited on Whitefield at the Tabernacle, and became a useful and laborious minister in her Ladyship's Connexion. When he was introduced to Whitefield, the latter took off his cap, and placed his hand on a deep scar on his head, and said, "Sir, this wound I got in your country for preaching Christ." These were the two celebrated preachers who came to Tunbridge Wells to open her Ladyship's chapel.

The one had grown old in the service of his Master, and was soon to lay aside the weapons of his warfare; the other had just entered the ranks, full of fire and energy, and was prepared to leap, sword in hand, into the midst of the enemy, and gain a glorious victory.

For some time before the opening of the chapel, the Countess was diligently occupied in sending invitations to persons in the neighbourhood, and also in more distant places, requesting their attendance on the joyful occasion. Many responded to her call; and a large number of persons flocked into Tunbridge Wells. At an early hour in the morning, they assembled in front of her Ladyship's residence, and sang their morning praises, and offered their morning petitions. The Countess was awakened by their singing, and experienced great pleasure in seeing the people around her house, where they remained till the commencement of the public services. These services were held on Sunday, July 23rd, 1769. As soon as the doors of the chapel were opened, every part of the place was thronged, and numbers crowded around the doors and the building. De Courcy read the Liturgy, and Whitefield preached from Gen. xxviii., 17. "How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." The congregation was far too large to be accommodated in the building; and Whitefield, like his great Master, preached in the open-air, from a mound in the court before the chapel. This remarkable spot, around which cluster many hallowed associations, in still preserved: and when standing where Whitefield stood, imagination pictures to the mind the form of this gifted preacher, stretching out his hands, and uttering some of those impassioned bursts of oratory by which he moved the masses to tears, or thrilled them with ecstatic joy. His sermon on this occasion is said to have been a perfect display of oratory. His words flowed like a graceful stream, and rushed like a foaming torrent; his face, lit up with heavenly fervour, was even more expressive that his language; his voice sounded like the varied tones of music; and his action formed the index of the passions which were playing upon his mind and heart. His prayer was most touching and overpowering; and fervently did he supplicate that many sinners might acknowledge that chapel as the place of their spiritual nativity. His petition was not in vain; numbers have been born there; and at the last great day it will be seen how many will acknowledge the debt of obligation they owe to the noble Countess for erecting a place of worship at Tunbridge Wells. In the evening, De Courcy preached from Rev. i., 18, "I am he that liveth, and was dead, and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death;" and Whitefield gave a general exhortation. The next day the Sacrament was administered by De Courcy, and Whitefield gave a solemn and impressive charge to the communicants from 1 Thes. ii., 11, 12. "Such a sacrament," says a lady who was then on a visit to the Wells, "as I never was present at before; I had such a view of Jesus Christ crucified, that I seemed as if caught up into the third heaven to hear things unutterable."

CHAPTER XVII. A.D. 1769—1770.

THE REV. R. DE COURCY.—HIS LABOURS IN SUSSEX.—TREVECCA COLLEGE.—THE CLASSICAL TUTOR.—THE ANNIVERSARY SERVICES.—JOHN BERRIDGE.—LIBERALITY OF LADY HUNTINGDON.—MR. VENN AT BATH.—THE STAR OF THE FIRST MAGNITUDE.—ITINERANT LABOURS.—LADY HUNTINGDON IN LONDON.—HER TRIALS.—STATE OF HER CONGREGATIONS.—REV. VINCENT PERRONET.—THE JOURNEYINGS OF THE COUNTESS.

After the dedication of the chapel at Tunbridge Wells, Lady Huntingdon proceeded to Lewes, accompanied by Mr. De Courcy, who preached twice to very large congregations in the open air. Her Ladyship then went to Brighton, where she made but a short stay; and leaving De Courcy to supply the chapel there and at Oathall, she returned to Tunbridge Wells. This devoted minister laboured with great zeal and success. He did not confine himself to the usual Sabbath duties, and week-day services; but occasionally went from house to house, teaching the people. He also held many society-meetings for prayer, and for encouraging the members to persevere in the divine life. The county of Sussex received great attention, and was traversed by Mr. De Courcy on his errand of mercy. His soul was in his work; and in a long letter to the Countess, he narrates the trials and encouragements he met with in his travels. Accompanied by many of his friends, he went to Hurst, a town five miles from Dichling, where he anticipated very severe persecution. As soon as he entered the streets, the whole town was in commotion, as if invaded by some foreign foe; and it was with much difficulty he could procure a chair to stand on. He had not proceeded far with the service, before some laughed, some shouted, some brought out a table and liquor, and began to sing around it, and others blew a horn; and while he was inviting the people to come and partake of the water of life freely, a poor man advanced towards him with a mug of ale, and begged he would drink heartily of that. He persevered in his discourse, and by his firmness silenced many; but at length, the uproar was so great, that he was obliged to desist, and conclude with a hymn. Still good was done there; many were deeply impressed; and one person in the town offered a part of his house for De Courcy to preach in.

While at Brighton, he received a letter from a person living in a place called Hellingby, twenty miles distant, representing the parish as a very dark and heathenish spot, without a minister. De Courcy thought this was a fine opportunity to introduce the gospel into the place; he, therefore, waited on the person, intending to preach the following Sabbath. The man, however, had totally misrepresented the state of things, and refused to have anything to do with a service in the parish; and as the rector was at home, De Courcy called upon him, with the hope of being able to secure the church; but when he heard that he was connected with Lady Huntingdon, he declined to allow him the use of his pulpit. The missionary departed with saddened feelings; and accompanied by a few friends, went to Laughton, where he stood up under a branching venerable tree, and preached to a small but very attentive congregation. The people rejoiced to hear the word of life, and begged that he would come again.

"The word in Sussex," says De Courcy, "calls aloud for more labourers. It is impossible for me to give your

Ladyship any idea of the universal thirst there is for the gospel, on every side of us, in the country parts. Every time I preach at Oathall, people come to me and cry out, like persons famishing with hunger, and begging a morsel of bread, '*Oh, Sir, wont you come to such a place?*' Indeed I wish it were in my power to supply every place; but my calls are so various that it is quite impracticable. I think Mr. Harman computed ten or twelve different parts to which we have been invited. I pray that the Lord may send us some help. I think Sussex seems to be on fire; and though the devil tries to extinguish the sacred flame, yet, glory be to God, it receives additional strength from every fresh flood poured on it, and burns the brighter. The Lord is reviving his work in the hearts of some here who have lost ground; he blesses us in every meeting. Yesterday was one of the days of the Son of Man. Oathall church was as full as it could hold, and the Lord was in the midst of us. The word was as a fire. I preached at eight in the morning, five miles from Oathall—at eleven, at Oathall—at six, at Brighthelmstone; and the Lord gave me such strength of body and spirit, that he enabled me to go through the whole, like a giant refreshed with new wine. I really felt no more lassitude of spirit or fatigue of body than if I had not spoken a word the whole day. That promise, 'As thy day is, so shall thy strength be' was my support, and was literally fulfilled to me. O my Lady, what a Master do we serve! What an ample reward does he give us even here! How sweet is his service!"

While Lady Huntingdon was rejoicing at the success which was attending her efforts in Sussex, she was anticipating with great pleasure the first anniversary services of her college in Wales. Mr. Easterbrook does not appear to have remained head-master of the Institution for any lengthened time; for before the anniversary, the Rev. John Jones, who had been one of the masters of Kingswood school, and had withdrawn from Wesley's Connexion, made application for the appointment to Mr. Fletcher. In the correspondence which ensued, Mr. Fletcher presents to Mr. Jones an account of the duties and qualifications of the head tutor. He says:—

"The first and grand point to be kept in view at Lady Huntingdon's College is to maintain, and grow in, the spirit of faith and power that breathes through the Acts of the Apostles, and was exemplified in the lives of the primitive Christians. The first and grand qualification required in a person called to be at the head of such a College is, then, a degree of faith and power from above, with an entire devotedness to God and his cause. The master who is there at present seems, on account of his youth, to be deficient in point of Christian experience. Nor is he a proper master of the Greek, nor even the harder classics, so that he can hardly maintain his superiority over those who read Cicero and Horace. Whether this inconveniency, sir, would be avoided, suppose you were to succeed him, I cannot judge by your letter. He is also unacquainted with Divinity and the Sciences, of which it is proper he should give the students some idea; and how far you may excel him in these points, sir, is not in my power to determine. He hath twenty-five guineas a year, with his board, room, and washing. I dare say the generous foundress would not hesitate to raise the salary of a master of superior merit, though she hopes none would undertake that province for the sake of money. * * *

"The variety of classes in the College demands great assiduity and diligence in the master. I would not, therefore, advise any one to engage without a proper trial. I have begged of Lady Huntingdon not to fix upon a master, till she had allowed him to look about him, and see how he liked the place, people, and business; and as you properly observe, sir, it would be improper to engage, to repent of the undertaking, I think that, if upon consulting with the Lord in prayer, and with Mr. Maxfield in conversation, you find your heart free to embrace so peculiar an opportunity of being useful to your generation, it might be best to come and see how you like the business, and how it agrees with you; and should not matters prove agreeable on either side, I dare say Lady Huntingdon will pay your travelling expenses to Talgarth and back again."

The Countess left Tunbridge Wells in August, for the purpose of attending the first anniversary of the opening of her College at Trevecca. For several weeks previous to that event, she was busily engaged in making preparations for the approaching services, and inviting many ministers to be present and take part in the proceedings. The solemn services extended over several days; and it may be interesting to many to know the character of the engagements. Messrs. Fletcher, Daniel Rowlands, and W. Williams arrived at the College on the 18th; and on the following morning, a sermon was preached by Mr. Rowlands to a large congregation from the words "Are there few that be saved?" In the afternoon, Mr. Fletcher addressed the communicants at the Lord's Supper and the spectators, and produced a deep impression upon them by the warmth and power of his appeals. This was on Saturday, when the people were crowding in from the distant parts of the country to attend the services on the Sabbath. Howell Harris perceived them congregating in the open court; and while those within the chapel were communing with their Lord, he stood up among the crowd, and addressed them from the words, "The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God."

Early on the Sabbath day, the roads and by-ways to Trevecca presented a very animated and picturesque appearance. Little groups of Welsh people were hurrying to the house of God, full of expectation and joy, and talking of the wonderful Lady and her zealous ministers. The chapel was incapable of containing one-half of the people; they, therefore, assembled in the court; and with the rich blue curtain of heaven for their canopy, they worshiped the Lord of heaven and earth. At ten, Mr. Fletcher read the Liturgy; after which, Mr. Shirley preached a glowing sermon on the text, "Acquaint thyself now with him and be at peace." At one, the sacrament was administered in the chapel, when the communicants were addressed by two ministers, Rowlands and Fletcher, and the spectators exhorted to decide at once for Christ by Mr. Williams. In the afternoon, the people again congregated in the court; and Mr. Fletcher addressed them from the words of the Apostle, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." There is nothing the Welsh people love more than to hear the gospel in their own native tongue; when, therefore, Mr. Rowlands rose to speak to them in the Welsh language, their eyes glistened with delight, and their hearts were filled with joy and gratitude. From this time to the anniversary day, the people continued to arrive at Trevecca from the surrounding country; and each day there was preaching twice by the clergymen, and lively addresses by Howell Harris and some of the Welsh exhorters. On Wednesday John Wesley arrived at the College, accompanied by Mr Howell Davis and Mr. Peter Williams, of Cærmarthen. He says, "I preached in the morning to as many as her Ladyship's chapel could well contain, which is extremely neat, or rather elegant, as is the dining-room, the College, and all the house. About nine, Howell Harris desired me to give a short exhortation to his family. I did so, and then went back to my Lady's, and laid me down in peace."

At length the long expected anniversary day dawned August 24th, 1769. The people were soon stirring, and flocked towards the spot where so many distinguished ministers of Christ were congregated together. At an early hour in the morning, the Lord's Supper was administered by Messrs. Wesley and Shirley, first to the clergymen; then to the students; and afterwards to the Countess of Huntingdon, the Countess of Buchan, Lady Ann Erskine, Miss Orton, and the other members of the family. The large concourse of people filled the chapel and the court: and at ten the solemn services commenced. Messrs. Davies and Rowlands read prayers, and appropriate lessons selected for the occasion; after which Mr. Fletcher preached one of his earnest spiritual discourses; and when he had finished, Mr. W. Williams addressed the people in Welsh, with that peculiar fire and energy which they greatly admire. This service lasted till nearly two o'clock, when the clergymen dined with Lady Huntingdon and her friends, and the people were supplied with bread and meat in the grounds of the mansion at her Ladyship's expense. At three, the services were resumed; when John Wesley preached to the people in the open-air, and was followed by Mr. Fletcher. The congregation was then dismissed, as many of the homes were at a great distance; and the interesting proceedings of the day closed with a devotional meeting—a love feast—where several ministers gave short and appropriate exhortations, and supplicated the divine blessing. There were eight clergymen present on this occasion.

Thus terminated the first anniversary of the useful college which Lady Huntingdon had founded. It was a time long remembered by the people, and is still spoken of with rapture by those who have had narrated to them by their forefathers the exciting scenes of these days. It was a time too when Christ manifested his presence, and sent down his blessing in an especial manner. The power was mighty which attracted, and held together for several days, the large numbers to hear the glad tidings of salvation; and the grace of God was conspicuous in calling many out of darkness into light, and making them the children of God. None retired from the services without receiving a spiritual blessing. Love was breathed into each heart, zeal was enkindled in each breast, devotion was inflamed on each tongue, and heavenly-mindedness impressed upon all. Every soul was contented and happy, and joined in the songs of Zion with voice and heart. Lady Huntingdon says, "Though necessarily much hurried with outward things, my mind was preserved in peace; I enjoyed a divine composure, a heavenly serenity of soul, while my communion was with the Father and the Son. Words fail to describe the holy triumph with which the great congregation sung,

'Captain of thine enlisted host, &c.'"

For several days after, there was public preaching every day, until Messrs. Shirley and Fletcher left, and Lady Huntingdon removed to Bath. She looked back upon the first year of the existence of the College with great delight and gratitude. She had been enabled to realize her cherished plan, and had witnessed the beneficial effects of her labours. The students had been harmoniously studying and preaching; and God had honoured their efforts. Their piety grew with their knowledge; their zeal increased with their opportunities; and the example of Lady Huntingdon banished from their minds every selfish and intolerant suggestion. Their services were appreciated and sought after; and she rejoiced to know they were made useful in Christ's service. This was the noble purpose of her life. She says, "O that I may be more and more useful to the souls of my fellow-creatures. I want to be every moment all life, all zeal, all activity for God, and ever on the stretch for closer communion with him. My soul pants to live more to Him, and to be more holy in heart and life, that all my nature may show forth the glories of the Lamb." What finer specimen of lofty, spiritual heroism is there, than in this glowing self-consecration, and panting after holiness, which Lady Huntingdon manifested!

Previous to the anniversary, she wrote to John Berridge and invited him to Trevecca. As his health was at this time very delicate, and prevented him attending to the duties of his parish, she thought that a change of air would be beneficial to him. He was, however, obliged to decline the invitation from his inability to bear the fatigue of so long a journey; but he requested her to assist him with the services of one of her students. His friend, Mr. Hicks, had occasionally helped him; but his parishioners were dissatisfied with his preaching. Mr. Glascott was accordingly sent to Everton to render what assistance he could to John Berridge. His services were very acceptable to the people, and gratifying to Mr. Berridge, who wrote to her Ladyship, and stated how much pleased he was with him, and that if she would spare him for six weeks, Mr. Glascott would be able in that time to visit all his churches. In his own peculiar style, he says, Mr. Glascott has "not a dozing face, with a hoarse doctrinal throat; but a right sharp countenance, with a clear gospel pipe."

Lady Huntingdon was sincerely attached to this devoted clergyman, notwithstanding his eccentricities. His letters to her are frequently couched in the most singular and extraordinary language. They sparkle with original figures, and witty sayings, and convey many powerful thoughts and practical suggestions, which render them peculiarly valuable. On one occasion, when he excused his declining her invitation to preach in one of her chapels, he pleaded that he had no coat fit to appear in out of his own parish, and requested her "to patch his coat with a small bank bill." The Countess, with that noble generosity which characterized her heart, wrote to him by return of post, and inclosed a bank post bill. The greatest difficulty connected with her liberality was to know how to refuse. Captain Scott said that she was so generous and bountiful that she actually gave to every one who asked her, until she was destitute. At length it became necessary to conceal cases from her. On one occasion, the Captain with a few ministers, having a case presented to them, and believing that the good Countess would give though she could ill afford it, resolved not to acquaint her with it. By some means however, she became acquainted with it, and with the combination of her ministers to conceal it; and she was so excessively grieved, that, the moment she saw Captain Scott, she burst into tears, and exclaimed, "I should never have thought *you* would have acted thus. I have never taken anything ill at your hands before; but this, I think, is very unkind!" She then gave one hundred pounds to the case.

The active spirit of Lady Huntingdon could not permit her to remain long in one place. Every locality, where she had introduced the gospel, was engraven on her heart, and present to her mental eye; and her anxiety for the welfare of her Societies led her to visit them, and ascertain their condition. Early in September, the Countess left Trevecca, and made a wide circuit on her way to Bath. She spent a few days at Berwick that she might encourage her friends there to be earnest in the service of Christ; and passed through Kidderminster, Worcester, and Gloucester to ascertain the state of these localities. At Bristol she was met by John Wesley, and visited the Kingwood School, and the Society in connexion with Whitefield. On the 13th, she summoned a large gathering of evangelical clergymen to breakfast at her house, and to converse on the best means of increasing the revival of true religion. It was a sweet and hallowed season; and after their deliberations, the Rev. Mr

Hart administered the sacrament, and John Wesley preached on the words, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." Leaving Wesley at Bristol, Lady Huntingdon, with Lady Buchan, Lady Ann Erskine, and Miss Orton, proceeded to Bath. The Countess was grateful to God for the health she now enjoyed, and for his preserving care over her amid the dangers she was exposed to; and though there were still many things to annoy her, and to retard her work, she felt greatly encouraged to persevere, by the success which had already crowned her efforts. She says, "The work is the Lord's; He is with me; He upholds my feeble hands, and condescends to help my humble plans for the promotion of his glory, and the eternal good of my fellow immortals."

Bath was the most important sphere of Lady Huntingdon's operations; and during this season was unusually crowded. Lady Fanny Shirley, Lady Gertrude Hotham, the Countess of Buchan, the Marchioness of Lothian and several other pious persons among the nobility now resided in the city, and attracted a large circle of friends around them. Great numbers of the illustrious visitors attended her chapel (where Mr. Venn preached) and not a few of them were induced to pay attention to their spiritual concerns. Lady Huntingdon engaged Mr. Venn to preach there. Early in October, he left Huddersfield for that purpose; and, like his divine Master, preached wherever he could obtain a pulpit on his way. Among other places, he visited Northampton to console Mr. Madan, who was sorrowing over the loss of his son; Reading, where his friend Dr. Talbot was labouring with great success; and Pewsey, to visit his zealous coadjutor in the work of the Lord, Mr. Townsend. He arrived safely in Bath, and found his "dear son in the gospel," Mr. Shirley, who was to share with him the work of the sanctuary. His labours were very acceptable to the people; and in his letters to his friends, he narrates the success he met with in preaching to the rich and mighty. In one letter, dated Bath, November 4th, he says:—

"On Sunday evening last there was such a crowded audience, Mr. Shirley told me, as there never was before. The chapel doors were set open, and people stood in the court as far as the houses. That full description of the way of salvation, and the object of the believer's hope; the condition of his enemies, and the glory of his people, in the concluding verses of Isaiah xlv. was my subject. Happily I am much alone! though solicited to spend my time with one family after another all the day. You may judge of this, when I tell you I have read two quarto volumes, with other books, and written nearly twenty letters, without intermitting my study of the ever-blessed Book."

In another letter, written the day after, he says:—

"I am favoured with the pleasing sight, and with the animating example, of a soul inflamed with love to a crucified God—that stumbling-block to them that perish. In Lady Huntingdon I see a star of the first magnitude in the firmament of the Church. Blessed be God for free grace, that salvation is to every one that cometh to Christ! otherwise, when I compare my life and my spirit with hers, I could not believe the same heaven was to contain us. How do works, the works of faith and love, speak and preach Jesus Christ, in that devoted servant of His! no equipage—no livery servants—no house;—all these given up, that perishing sinners may hear the life-giving sound, and be enriched with all spiritual blessings. Her prayers are heard; her chapel is crowded; and many sinners among the poor are brought into the City of Refuge. Happy is it for us, my friend, that we have been brought into that city—that we know in whom we we have believed—that we can say, 'Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength! that we have been happily reduced to the necessity of confessing we have nothing to pay, nothing to plead, but 'Worthy is the lamb.' This is all our relief, consolation, and triumph; and will be through all ages. I feel, from Lady Huntingdon's example, an increasing desire, both for myself, and you, and all our friends, that we may be active and eminent in the life of grace."

When Mr. Venn left Bath, he undertook for Lady Huntingdon a preaching tour, on his way towards Yorkshire. He first stopped at Worcester, where a considerable awakening had taken place through the preaching of the gospel by her ministers and students. As the churches were frequently denied him, he preached wherever he could gather a congregation; in large rooms—crowded streets—and the open fields. He paid a visit to Lord Dartmouth, at Sandwell, near West Bromwich; where he remained some time, and preached in the neighbouring towns and villages. He also itinerated in Cheshire, and proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation in many benighted districts. Though these journeys were undertaken at the request of Lady Huntingdon, it is but justice to the character of Mr. Venn to mention, that there was no foundation for the reports which were circulated, that he was induced to preach for her by pecuniary considerations. He never expected the least remuneration; and all he would receive barely paid his travelling and necessary expenses. His heart sympathized with the plans of the Countess, and would never have sanctioned the bestowal of her liberality upon himself. Her generosity was unbounded; her wealth was consecrated to the service of her Saviour; she severely denied herself that she might extend the kingdom of Christ; and carefully saw that the distribution of her wealth was applied to promote the glory of God;—yet, with all her fortune and self-denial, her finances were inadequate to carry out her plans, and she could never have done the noble acts which mark her character had she not found such men as Mr. Venn and her chaplains, willing to accomplish her desires with the same distinguished zeal, and to spend their substance, as well as themselves, in the same glorious cause.

Towards the end of the year 1769, Lady Huntingdon left her chapel at Bath in the hands of the Rev. Messrs. Townsend and Jesse, and visited the metropolis. The first day of the new year was set apart by her for fasting, close examination, deep humiliation of spirit, and renewed dedication of herself to God. In the morning she was greatly stimulated by a sermon from the Rev. A. Kinsman, of Plymouth, who was then supplying Whitefield's chapels in London, on the words, "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees." In the evening she heard a most thrilling discourse from Romaine at the Lock chapel, on the striking words of Jeremiah, "This year thou shalt die." It was the means of arousing her attention to the end which awaits all mortal creatures. God had spared her amid disease, and dangers: but her night would come at last, though the evening might continue long; and therefore she resolved to labour more earnestly, and extensively for the glory of God, while it was day. She enjoyed the sweet sense of God's smile and blessing; and delighted to commune with him, that she might be prepared for the trials which she saw gathering around her, and to do his will, whether its performance aroused the hostility of the world, or called forth its gratitude and approbation. The more she enjoyed the light of heaven, the more clearly she discerned the depravity of her heart, the crafty nature of evil, and the unspeakable preciousness of Jesus Christ.

Lady Huntingdon had her outward trials as well as her inward experiences. Her divine Father chastened her, as she was able to bear it; and often reminded her that she was but a feeble instrument in his hands, and that the success of her labours was derived from him alone. In many places where she had succeeded in planting the gospel standard, great success at first attended the efforts of her ministers, and much spirituality and zeal glowed in the hearts of the converts to Christ. After a time, however, in some places the scene changed, and a deadly apathy crept over the congregation. This greatly discouraged her heart: she wrestled more earnestly in prayer to God for them; poured out her complaints to her chief advisers; and moved among the different stations with greater frequency. This trial, however, was not of long continuance. The clouds which had darkened her prospect separated, and allowed a few beams of sunshine to cheer her, before another storm passsed over her head, and desolated the religious community.

It was during the month of January, 1770, the Countess paid a visit to the venerable Vincent Perronet, vicar of Shoreham, Sussex. His name had long attracted considerable notice in the religious world; his talents and accomplishments would have qualified him to occupy with dignity any station; and his family connections opened to him the prospect of considerable preferment in the church; yet, when the clear light of the gospel shone into his heart, he instantly renounced his ecclesiastical prospects, and devoted himself to promote the revival of religion in England. He had occasionally corresponded with Lady Huntingdon, but had never had a personal interview with her, till she visited him at his residence. She was greatly pleased with his manly and exalted piety, his gentle and engaging manners, and the simplicity and sweetness of his disposition. She says, "He is a most heavenly man, with the most lively piety, joined with the profoundest humility, and ardent concern for the salvation of the people committed to his charge." She was accompanied to Shoreham by Mr. Wesley, who remained there a few days, while she proceeded to Tunbridge Wells, to regulate some affairs connected with her chapel in that town. She journeyed thence to Brighton and Oathall to meet Romaine, who had arrived there a few days before.

The Countess returned to her residence in Portland Row, London, in the month of February. On the 6th, Wesley administered the sacrament at her house *for the last time.* A coolness had existed between them for some time, which was rapidly increasing, and finally terminated in a total separation. He was, however, at her house the following week; when Dr. Talbot administered the ordinance, and the Rev. Moses Browne of Olney preached, and he concluded with prayer. For a few weeks, these services were continued at her house by several clergymen, and were made very useful to the higher circles. Romaine returned from Brighton early in March, and on the 5th accompanied the Countess to Reading, where she remained a few days with her excellent friends. On the 9th, she journeyed to Bristol, where Romaine preached twice in the churches, and the day after went to Bath, and heard her chaplain preach to a very large and attentive audience. On the 14th, Romaine accompanied her to Cheltenham; and being refused the use of the parish church, he addressed a large congregation in a spacious school-room, where her ministers had often preached. On the 16th, she left Cheltenham for Oxford; and on the following day arrived at Reading, where Romaine was to preach on the Sabbath. The Countess spent two days in London, and set off for Brighton on the 22nd, accompanied by Lady Ann Erskine, Miss Orton, and Mr. Maxfield. Such is a specimen of the journeys of Lady Huntingdon; and when the mode of travelling, the dangerous state of the roads in these times, and the age of the Countess, are considered, it must excite surprise that her feeble health was able to endure the fatigue of these energetic labours.

CHAPTER XVIII. A.D. 1770—1771.

THE PERIOD OF CONTROVERSY.—THE CALVINISTIC AND ARMINIAN METHODISTS.—THE MINUTES OF CONFERENCE.—REV. J. BENSON.—MR. FLETCHER AT THE COLLEGE.—THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY SERVICES.—THE PROSPERITY OF THE COLLEGE.—DEATH OF WHITEFIELD.—THE NOBILITY AT BATH.—ROWLAND HILL. THE PROGRESS OF STRIFE.—BENSON DISMISSED FROM THE COLLEGE.—FLETCHER RESIGNS THE PRESIDENCY. THE RISING STORM.—THE CONFERENCE.—THE PAPER WAR.—REFLECTIONS ON THE CONTROVERSY.

THE period of controversy should be approached with great caution by every historian. The arena on which the battle is fought is necessarily circumscribed; the weapons employed are generally sharpened by much that is personal and offensive; the tide of victory apparently changes as each combatant brings up his forces; and so much must, from the nature of the conflict, be inevitably concealed, and what is evident must touch some bias of the mind or heart,—that even the desire to be impartial does not always secure that happy result. It is notorious that no controversy is so powerful, and painful in its consequences, as one which partakes of a theological character. The subject is associated with the deepest feelings of man's nature; to touch a religious conviction is to touch the apple of the eye; and the call to surrender a dogma which, perhaps, has been cherished from the earliest days of manhood, is treated more harshly than even a call to surrender some temporal possession. It is well that it is so; for though it renders the process of destroying error painful and difficult, it forms a great barrier around the truth, and prevents its being carried away in the fierce struggles of theological controversy. It must ever be deplored that the contest for truth is not usually carried on without awakening bitter feelings, jealousies, reproaches, and personalities, among the combatants. In the heat of strife, party-spirit often prevails over the love of truth; and the contest merges into a trial of strength between two religious persons or communities. Especially if the subject be one of deep and mysterious profundity, there is a great temptation to indulge in subtile speculations, and to dogmatize where it is more becoming to be careful and reserved.

It was during this year that the memorable controversy arose between the Arminian and Calvinistic Methodists, which raged with great fury for nearly six years, and ended in a total separation of these two bodies of Christians. The mighty champions, Whitefield and Wesley, had often come into collision on their respective distinguishing tenets; though, by mutual forbearance, they had hushed the angry growl which occasionally arose, and united with each other in promoting the spread of the gospel. Lady Huntingdon was very anxious to preserve the harmonious co-operation of the leaders; and though firmly attached to the opinions she held, she knew that there was common ground on which both could stand, and maintain a fraternal association. Her efforts to secure such a happy state of things have been narrated; and to a certain extent, she succeeded in establishing an outward union. Her discerning eye, however, could detect in Wesley a want of cordiality and sympathy towards the Calvinists; and the prominence which he gave to the doctrine of *Christian Perfection* awakened her suspicions. He soon began to decline in her estimation; and it was not long before she discovered in his proceedings a fresh cause for alarm. Two years before this period, he wrote a letter to Mr. Fletcher, warning him against very friendly intercourse with the Calvinists, whom he speaks of in a sneering manner, and alluding covertly to his connection with Lady Huntingdon. The Countess was soon aware of this; and though assured that the attempt to prejudice Mr. Fletcher had failed, she could not forget, even if she could forgive, the ungenerous conduct of John Wesley. The breach every month became wider; the flame of contention was enkindled, and, though repressed, was gaining power; the significant lull was passing into a rising storm; and signs of the approach of a season of remarkable strife were now and then appearing. The views of each were rapidly changing towards each other; Wesley regarded the Countess in a new aspect, and her Ladyship cherished towards Wesley very different feelings from what she had hitherto manifested. At length the crisis came; the war-note was sounded; the battle commenced.

Wesley convened in London the twenty-seventh annual Conference of preachers, August 7th, 1770; and to raise a bulwark against Antinomianism, or the *abuse* of the doctrine of free grace, he drew up certain propositions, condemning the Calvinistic sentiments, which were argeed to by the Conference. These propositions naturally gave great offence to the whole body of the Calvinistic Methodists, and created considerable alarm among them. Lady Huntingdon, and several other persons, protested against the Minutes of Conference, as striking at the fundamental doctrines of the gospel; and Mr. Shirley said publicly, "that he deemed peace in such a case a shameful indolence, and silence no less than treachery!" The consideration of the points at issue took a deep hold on the public mind; and after silently slumbering for a short time, the controversy at length drew into the field several champions on both sides. One of these was the head-master of her Ladyship's college in Wales.

In the beginning of this year, the Rev. Joseph Benson was, through the influence of Mr. Fletcher, appointed to the situation which had been vacated by Mr. Easterbrook. He had for some years filled the office of classical tutor in Kingswood school, and was, at the time of his appointment, studying at St. Edmund's Hall, Oxford His duties there did not permit him to reside at the college till the spring; when, being dismissed from Oxford because of his connexion with Lady Huntingdon, he commenced his labours among the students with the promise of much success, and was satisfied with the progress they made in learning and piety. He found a warm coadjutor in Mr. Fletcher, who frequently visited the college, and was hailed with great delight by the students. The holy and devout conversation of this man of God endeared him to them, and awakened in their hearts such love and veneration towards him, that they were almost ready to adore him. His appearance among them was the signal to leave off their usual studies, and to sit at his feet and receive spiritual instruction. Languages, the arts and sciences, and even theology itself, were laid aside when he entered the hall. His heart was overflowing with the love of Christ, and the students were more ready to hearken to the outpouring of his soul, than to attend to their classical studies, or literary pursuits; and seldom hearkened long, before their eyes were filled with tears, and their hearts glowed with the fire which burned in his soul. He kept steadily in view the object these young men had before them—to win souls to Christ—; and was well aware that classical learning and literature, though very important and useful, would never fit them for their work without deep and fervent piety, and the indwelling of the Spirit. After speaking to them for some time, he often said "As many of you as are athirst for this fulness of the Spirit, follow me into my room." Many instantly rose and followed him, and continued there for two or three hours, praying one after another with great earnestness and power. This was the ordinary employment of this eminent minister while he remained at Trevecca. He frequently preached to the students and the family, and to as many of the neighbours as wished to be present; when he illustrated some important truth, reminded them of some neglected duty, administered some needful consolation, and enlivened the whole by relating some useful anecdote. His heart glowed with love, his mind sparkled with intelligence, his soul breathed affection. His manner varied with his subject. Sometimes it was grand and solemn, sometimes sweet and placid; and often his soul lit up his countenance with such rapturous delight, that his very face seemed almost angelic, and charmed his hearers. His heart was in his work; and when circumstances prevented him visiting the college, he affectionately remembered his charge, and wrote them many addresses, full of scriptural instruction and fervent piety.

The controversy had scarcely made any stir when Lady Huntingdon was preparing to celebrate the second anniversary of her college. On the 18th of August, her Ladyship, with Mr. Shirley and Mr. Venn, arrived at Brislington near Bristol, the residence of James Ireland, Esq., a man well known in the religious world, and a friend to all parties. Wesley was then staying at Bristol with the expectation of accompanying her into Wales to attend the approaching anniversary of her college, as he had been invited thither the preceding year. The Countess, however, had come to the determination of excluding him from her pulpits as long as he adhered to the resolutions passed at the late conference; and accordingly wrote to him to that effect. Wesley returned no answer to the communication, but the next day left Bristol for

Cornwall, and never again preached in the chapels of Lady Huntingdon.

On the 21st, the whole party, consisting of the Countess, Lady Ann, Miss Orton, Mr. Ireland, Mr. Llodd, and her Ladyship's ministers, set out for Trevecca, where a large company of ministers and lay-preachers, among whom were Messrs. Fletcher, W. Williams, Rowlands, Peter Williams, and Howell Harris, awaited their arrival. The next morning the series of services commenced, and were continued till after the anniversary day; when the sacrament was administered, the students addressed, and the gospel preached to the people in the chapel, and in the open court. The attendance on these occasions was large; but on the anniversary day the number of people collected from all parts of the country even exceeded that of last year. At six o'clock in the morning of that day, August 24th, a public prayer-meeting was held in the chapel to implore the divine blessing to rest on the solemn services before them; after which the sacrament was administered by the President of the College, first to the ten clergymen present, then to the students, the Countess and her friends, and afterwards to many of the congregation. The public service commenced at ten o'clock in the morning. A platform had been erected in the court for the ministers and students, which was surrounded by a vast concourse of people. Mr. Fletcher read prayers and appropriate lessons; Mr. Peter Williams offered up a fervent extempore prayer for the preacher and the hearers; the congregation sung with spirit and joy that well-known hymn, "*Arm of the Lord, awake, awake!*" and Mr. Shirley stood in front of the platform to preach to the people. After he had concluded, Mr. W. Williams preached to them in Welsh, and stirred up the Welsh fire in the breasts of his hearers. At two they all dined, as on the former occasion; and the sight of the people, clustering in little bands, and singing amid the shady retreats of the grounds and neighbourhood, formed a most beautiful spectacle. At three, the services were recommenced; when John Berridge preached one of his powerful discourses, and riveted the attention of his hearers by his flashing strokes of wit and satire. Mr. Rowlands also preached to the people in Welsh, and sent them to their homes with gladdened hearts, and holy thoughts. While the people were hastening homewards, and talking of the exciting scenes they had witnessed, the students were being addressed by Mr. Venn, who urged them to persevere in their work, to preach Christ, and to depend on the promised aid of the Spirit to cheer, support and bless them. Mr Fletcher closed the proceedings of the day with earnest prayer for the divine blessing to rest on the congregation, the college, the students, the Countess, the world; that peace and prosperity might continue; and that all might be more active in diffusing the truth, and in attempting to save a guilty race.

Thus terminated the second anniversary of her college. The most delightful spirit of piety and brotherly affection pervaded the whole of the proceedings; and the presence of Christ was manifested in an especial manner. The congregations were unusually numerous, and attentive; and felt deeply the stirring appeals that were made to their hearts. The next day, after a devotional meeting, Lady Huntingdon and her suite left Trevecca, and paid a visit to Mr. Powys at his mansion in Shropshire; where, on the Sabbath, Mr. Berridge and Mr. Venn preached to the people. She then proceeded to Worcester, where she staid a few days to encourage the people who had been aroused by the preaching of her students in that city; and then went forward to Bristol, where she met with Charles Wesley, who accompanied her to Bath, and preached several times in her chapel.

As Lady Huntingdon's sphere of usefulness every year was becoming more extensive, her expenses were consequently greatly augmented. Her income was inadequate to meet the demands made upon her liberality; and but for the occasional assistance of some kind and wealthy friends, she would sometimes have been involved in difficulties. It was about this time, she received a *second* gift of *Five Hundred Pounds* from Mr. Thornton towards defraying the expense of the College. From Lady Glenorchy, Lady Chesterfield, Mr. Lloyd, Mr. Ireland, and Miss Orton, she likewise received considerable sums, amounting to nearly *One Thousand Pounds*, which enabled her to pursue her plans for promoting the spiritual happiness of her fellow creatures. In the letter which accompanied her donation, Lady Glenorchy says:—

"I am rejoiced at the success which has attended the college, and of your very extensive field of labour. * * * Knowing the many demands on your generosity, I beg your acceptance of the enclosed for four hundred pounds, which you will oblige me by expending in advancing that glorious cause which my heart longs to serve; and at the same time allow me to repeat what I have already assured your Ladyship, that my purse is always at your command, as I feel persuaded that the Lord smiles upon your plans of usefulness, and will crown them with his blessing. Your Ladyship's account of what occurred at Mr. Wesley's last conference does not surprise me. I have since seen the minutes, and must bear my feeble testimony against the sentiments contained in them. May the Lord God of Israel be with you, and enable you to make a firm stand in defence of a free-grace gospel."

Lady Huntingdon thanked her for her generous gift to the college, which, she says, "has been the offspring of many tears, and strong crying to the great and glorious Head of the Church," and adds:—

"The College is in a most glorious state. The unction of the Holy One is continually descending on all its beloved inmates, and the love and harmony that reigns amongst them all, it is most delightful to witness. Fired with a zeal for God and perishing souls, all seemed determined, in their strength, to spend and be spent in this divine employ. The College, as dear Berridge says, has been baptized with the baptism of the Holy Ghost; great grace rests upon all within its walls, and eminent success crowns their labours in the towns and villages around. To God alone be all the glory—the work is his, and he will carry it on in his own way. His smiles of approbation have cheered my heart amidst the many labours, cares and sorrows, I have to contend with. I thirst for an entire devotedness to him, and his cause and interest in the world. O that I had a thousand hands, a thousand hearts; all should be employed for him—for *He is worthy!*"*

While Lady Huntingdon was at Bath, the melancholy intelligence reached London that her oldest chaplain George Whitefield was now no more! He had spent his last year in America, where he preached almost daily to large audiences. His strength often failed him; and he frequently remarked that he now grew weary *in* the work, but not *of* it. He had preached at Exeter on the 29th of September 1770, and after dinner rode over to Newberry Port, near Boston. He retired to rest early; but in the night felt a suffocation creeping over him. He got out of bed, and sat near the open window; but gradually grew worse; and at six o'clock in the morning, his spirit gently left the body, and took its joyful flight. For some time, Lady Huntingdon was nearly overwhelmed with her unspeakable loss. He had been her associate during many years; to him she had been accustomed to look for aid and counsel; and by his talents, God had been pleased to awaken many of her noble friends to see the importance of religion. She showed every mark of respect to the memory of her departed chaplain; she hung the pulpit, reading-desks, and galleries, with black; and summoned Mr. Venn to preach his funeral sermon at her chapel on the 18th of November, the day on which John Wesley discharged a similar duty in London. An immense crowd thronged every part of the chapel, and all appeared deeply affected.

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* Life and Times, vol. ii, p. 110-112.

A just and graceful eulogy was paid to his character. He was an extraordinary man, and accomplished a most marvellous work. His figure was commanding; his features, good and pleasing; his voice, strong and clear; his action, graceful and winning. He possessed remarkable activity of body and mind, and swayed his vast audiences by his matchless oratory; he commanded the attention of all classes of hearers, and preserved his popularity to the very last. He gave prominence to the great doctrines of the cross; and illustrated and enforced them with all the resources of his versatile mind. He followed up his preaching with private exhortation; and often, for hours after his sermons, attended to the anxious and despairing sinners who flocked to him for his advice. He won the confidence and affection of all. The most timid forgot their fears, and the weeping their sorrows, when charmed by the music of his voice. England still owes a debt of obligation to the memory of this distinguished preacher; and well would it be for her present religious condition, if the spirit, which prompted the energetic labours of Whitefield, were again to glow in her sons!

> "In him there dwelt a spirit generous, bold,
> Unawed by threatenings, unallured by gold;
> Preferments, honours, ease, he deemed but loss,
> Vile and contemptible for Jesu's cross;
> Inured to scandal, injuries, and pain,
> For him to live was Christ, to die was gain."

In the year 1771, the eccentric Lady Betty Germaine arrived in Bath, and paid her respects to Lady Huntingdon. She had often heard Whitefield at her Ladyship's residence, and had invited the Countess to some of her parties which were attended by the principal literary characters of the day. It was at her house Lady Huntingdon met with Horace Walpole, Dr. Johnson, Garrick, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and other celebrated persons. The niece of Lady Betty, the witty and eccentric Lady Craven, better known as the Margravine of Anspach, expressed great regard for the Countess; and the well-known Mrs. Montague, who had long been acquainted with Lady Huntingdon, was extremely partial to her society. Lord Chancellor Thurlow was at this time in Bath, and was introduced to the Countess by Lady Betty. He endeavoured to dazzle Lady Huntingdon with the variety and splendour of his talents; but she turned the tide in her favour, and greatly surprised him by the simplicity of her conversation, and the depth of her theological knowledge. His Lordship had formed the habit, then fearfully characteristic of the nobility, of intermingling oaths with his conversation; and it is said that the reproofs of Lady Huntingdon were of such service to him, that his friends asserted he would soon become a convert to all her Ladyship's opinions. He was a man of very superior mind, and filled his high station with deserved reputation.

In the spring of this year, Rowland Hill commenced preaching at the Tabernacle, Bristol, and in the neighbourhood; and visited many parts of Gloucestershire, Somersetshire, and Wiltshire. His head-quarters were at Lady Huntingdon's house at Bath, where he was welcomed with great cordiality. He preached for the Countess with much success. On one of his preaching excursions, he visited Wotton-under-Edge, to which he became so partial as to make it his favourite summer-residence in after life. An old lady, connected with one of the most respectable families in the place, who was awakened to seek after salvation under his ministry, often described his first visit to Wotton. She was sitting at the tea-table, when a relative burst into the room, and said, "Ann, the baronet's son, who goes about preaching, is now under the market-house." "Are you sure it is the baronet's son himself?" she inquired. "Yes, that I am; for I saw his brother, Mr. Richard Hill, not long ago, and he is so like him, I am sure he is of the same family." She rose up: and impelled by curiosity to see and hear the stranger, she accompanied her relative, little thinking of the important consequences his preaching would bring to her. While she was standing listening, a man by her side seized a stone to hurl at Mr. Hill; but another caught his arm, and exclaimed in the broad dialect of the country, "If thee doost touch him, I'll knock thee head off." The man dropped his stone; and a solemn silence reigned a minute after.

About the middle of June, Mr. Romaine arrived in Bath, and was shortly after followed by Mr. Townsend, who had left Edinburgh in March to supply the chapel at Bretby; where he remained some weeks previous to his return to Pewsey. Towards the end of the month, Lady Huntingdon accompanied these two zealous ministers on a tour into Wiltshire and Somersetshire; and visited, besides many other places, Frome, Pensford, Shepton-Mallet, Warminster, and Bradford, where much good was effected by the preaching of the gospel. After remaining a few days at Bath, she accepted the invitation of Mr. Ireland to spend a short time at Brislington; and staid there with Mr. Romaine till the beginning of August, when she left for Trevecca. As Charles Wesley was then at Bristol, her Ladyship had many opportunities of conversing with him on the impending controversy, which was daily becoming more serious and alarming.

The head-master of her Ladyship's college was early involved in the struggle. His long connexion with Wesley had predisposed him to assent to the doctrines which the conference had declared; and he accordingly corresponded with Wesley, and defended him against the attacks of his opposers. Lady Huntingdon had stated her determination that whoever embraced these doctrines should quit her College; and an animated correspondence ensued between Wesley, Benson, and the Countess, in which the mildest terms were not selected to convey their respective sentiments. Mr. Benson, besides defending Wesley, wrote on the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and avowed sentiments which her Ladyship and Mr. Shirley considered unscriptural. Lady Huntingdon then repeated her expressed determination that every Arminian should quit her College; Wesley stimulated Benson to adhere to the Minutes of Conference; and the head-master was consequently dismissed from his office. The Countess had no fault to find with his talents, conduct, or piety; but she thought it would be inflicting a severe blow upon what she considered the purity of the faith, to continue him in a position, where his influence would certainly indoctrinate the students with his opinions. She dismissed him with a testimonial, in which she speaks very highly of his talents and diligence, and which reflects equal credit on the parties concerned.

As Mr. Benson had been recommended by Mr. Fletcher, and had been intimately associated with him at the college, it was perfectly natural he should write to him, and explain the cause of his dismissal. The vicar of Madeley was much grieved at the step which Lady Huntingdon had taken, and at her imperious tone; he, therefore, wrote to her Ladyship a letter, dated January 1st, 1771, which stated that Mr. Benson made a just defence, when he said that he did hold with him the possibility of salvation to all men; that mercy is offered to all, and yet may be received or rejected; that such were his own sentiments: and that if those who held them must quit the College then he was actually dismissed too.

"For my part," he says with warmth, "I am no party-man. In the Lord, I am your servant, and that of your every student; but I cannot give up the honor of being connected with my old friends, who, notwithstanding their failings, are entitled to my respect, gratitude, and assistance, could I occasionally give them any. Mr. Wesley shall always be welcome to my pulpit, and I shall gladly bear my testimony in his, as well as Mr. Whitefield's. But if your Ladyship forbid your students to preach for the one, and offer them to preach for the other at every turn; and if a master is discarded for believing that Christ died for all—then prejudice reigns; charity is cruelly wounded; and party spirit shouts, prevails, and triumphs."

He shortly afterwards visited Trevecca, and in a letter to Mr. Benson, dated March 22nd, 1771, says:—

"On my arrival at the College I found all very quiet, I fear through the enemy keeping his goods in peace. While I preached, I found myself as much shackled as ever I was in my life, and, after private prayer, I concluded I was not in my place. The same day I resigned my office to my Lady, and on Wednesday to the students and the Lord. * * * Last Friday, I left them all in peace, the servant, but no longer the president, of the College. My Lady behaved with great candour and condescension towards me; but as for you, you are still out of her books, and are likely so to continue."

The controversy now began to assume a threatening aspect. Lady Huntingdon widley circulated a printed letter, and invited the Calvinistic clergy to assemble at Bristol, and to meet the Wesleyan Conference; and either compel them to revoke their last Minutes, or sign a formal protest against them. The circular enclosed copies of the Minutes of Conference, and of the proposed protest, and was signed by Walter Shirley. The Countess again wrote to Wesley; who vindicated his conduct with great clearness, and showed that in his sermons he had for forty years maintained one uniform doctrine, and that the Minutes should be construed in harmony with his well-known views, and not forced into a contradiction of his previous doctrines. Mr. Fletcher was much incensed when he read the circular; he bitterly complained of the injustice done to Wesley, and threatened to take the field in his defence, if the meditated attack was not immediately abandoned. Lady Huntingdon manifested perhaps more zeal than prudence on this occasion; but deeming it a vital matter, she was prepared to sacrifice friendship, yea even herself, in the cause of truth! She replied to Fletcher's letter; and though deprecating the course he was taking, she stated her determination to fight to the very last for the honor of Jesus, though all should forsake her, and leave her alone in the field! The circular letter, and the copy of the protest, evidently stimulated opposition, and called forth from many, a remonstrance against their intention to come in a body, and extort a recantation. Her Ladyship endeavoured to soften, or remove, their objection to the mode she was adopting; and Mr. Shirley wrote to Wesley, regretting the offence which the circular had given, and requesting to know by what other way, more agreeable to the Conference, the protesting party could be admitted to state their objections to the Minutes of last Conference.

At length the eventful day arrived. The Conference was held at Bristol, August 6th, 1771; and the assembly was crowded, as most of Wesley's friends rallied around him. On the 8th, at ten in the morning, Mr. Shirley, and about ten of his friends, were admitted; when a conversation ensued for nearly two hours. The result was such as might have been expected, when Christian men meet together, and explain their respective views with calmness and candour. Mr. Fletcher says, "All were pleased with Mr. Shirley's conduct; so much like a minister of the Prince of Peace, and a meek, humble, loving, brother in the gospel of Christ." Wesley drew up a declaration; which stated that, as the Minutes were understood to favour justification by works, such a doctrine was abhorred by them; and that, as the Minutes were not sufficiently guarded, they declared that they have no trust or confidence but in the sole merits of Christ for justification or salvation. This declaration was agreed to by Mr. Shirley and his friends, who candidly admitted that they had been too hasty in condemning the sentiments of Wesley.

The storm had thus apparently blown over, and the serene sunshine was confidently anticipated; but, unfortunately, a circumstance arose which brought back the electric flash, and whirled the elements into a perfect tempest. At the request of Wesley, Mr. Fletcher had prepared a vindication of the doctrines contained in the Minutes, in the shape of five letters addressed to Mr. Shirley. The manuscript was finished a week before the opening of Conference, and presented to Wesley to publish or suppress as he deemed fit. It remained in Wesley's hands till after he had signed the declaration; but, strange as it may appear, on his leaving Bristol for Wales on Monday, August 12th, he committed Fletcher's vindication to the press, and left directions that it should be published with all speed! Mr. Fletcher no sooner heard of the declaration, and of Shirley's noble conduct, than he felt the greatest anxiety to suppress the publication of his "*Letters*." He wrote to Mr. Ireland, and earnestly intreated him to take immediate steps to prevent their appearance. The printer was seen; the stewards of the Bristol Methodist Society communicated with; and every endeavour made to prevent the pamphlet seeing the light of day. All efforts, however, were unavailing; and nothing could now prevent the outbreak of the war of controversy. Mr. Olivers, one of Wesley's preachers, a fiery zealous man, was intrusted with the publication; and as he had opposed the declaration, he was only too glad to give to the world the opinions of Mr. Fletcher on a subject in which he was specially interested.

Mr. Shirley hastened to Trevecca to consult her Ladyship; and as Fletcher's vindication was published against his wish, through the strange inconsistency of Wesley, and the fiery zeal of his preacher, it became necessary for Shirley to publish a narrative of the facts and letters connected with the whole affair. He wrote, and announced his intention, to Mr. Fletcher; who replied that he had no objection to his letters being made public, and that if the pamphlet were friendly, and the same size as his vindication, he would take ten pounds' worth to circulate with his vindication. The narrative appeared; and Wesley's friends were shocked to find his Minutes described as "an attack upon the foundation of our hope." Fletcher was again summoned to the rescue, and published "*A Second Check to Antinomianism*," in three letters to Mr. Shirley; but he did not succeed in disproving that Wesley's declaration was a recantation of the Minutes of Conference. The controversy soon became sharper and more extended, until at last it ended in a total separation of the Wesleyans and the Calvinistic Methodists. To close this unpleasant affair we must anticipate a little the chronological order of events.

In 1772 and 1773, Sir Richard Hill and his brother Rowland entered the lists; and were replied to with great earnestness by Mr. Fletcher in several pamphlets. Other combatants now appeared in the field, and arranged themselves on their respective sides. Augustus Toplady hurled his "*More work for John Wesley:*" Sir R. Hill his "*Finishing Stroke*;" Berridge his "*Christian World unmasked:*" but the indefatigable pen of Fletcher met his opponents, and returned the assaults. Many opprobrious epithets were employed; scurrility, abuse, and personalities abounded; and feelings, which were anything but Christian, were manifested towards each other. Many good and holy men attempted to sweeten the bitter animosity which existed; and during the year 1774, national calamities suspended the controversy; but in the following year, the campaign was opened by Toplady, and the great struggle was renewed. We need not, however, further pursue the narration of this conflict, as it belongs more to the province of eclesiastical history than to our present purpose.

A review of the whole controversy brings with it many painful reflections. It is sad to see the Church of Christ held up to the scorn and ridicule of the world by its most zealous friends; and to witness one portion arrayed against another in deadly strife. The strife first arose in misrepresentation, was continued in party spirit and fierce anger, and ended in separation and jealousy. Both parties are equally to be blamed; both selected weapons, and appealed to passions, unworthy of the cause of religion; and both failed to detect the strength and harmony of their respective views, and plunged into an abyss of metaphysical abstractions. There can be no doubt of the sincerity and zeal of the Countess in the decided step she took at first; but it must also be admitted that her love of truth carried her away, in the warmth of her feelings, to do, and to say things, which, on calmer reflection, perhaps, she wished had never occurred. Wesley was guilty of stirring up the strife by unjustifiably publishing Fletcher's vindication, after he had signed the declaration which refuted the obnoxious clauses; and to him and

Toplady must be awarded the palm for garnishing their papers with scurrility and unchristian appeals. Fletcher was decidedly an able disputant, though many of his remarks were most biting and severe; and sometimes his fervid eloquence enticed him from the investigation of abstruse points, and led him to expend his strength in loose declamation. All parties, on calm reflection, deplored the manner in which they had contended. Fletcher deeply regretted that he had ever taken up his pen on behalf of Wesley; Toplady wished he had seen his opponents, instead of only reading their productions; and Rowland Hill admitted that a softer style and spirit would better have become him. Had a meeting been convened, where each could have explained his peculiar views, and kept his investigation within reasonable bounds, the enmity which existed between the two great sections of Methodism would never have appeared, and Calvinists and Arminians would not have rushed to the opposite poles of Christian truth, whither so many have been driven by speculation, and the pride of reason.

CHAPTER XIX. A.D. 1771—1772.

RESPONSIBLE POSITION OF THE COUNTESS—TOUR IN WALES.—CHAPEL AT SWANSEA.—LABOURS OF THE STUDENTS.—MARGATE.—DOVER.—FOLKSTONE.—DEAL.—CANTERBURY.—ASHFORD.—MAIDSTONE.—THE MIDLAND COUNTIES.—DORSETSHIRE.—DEVONSHIRE.—LADY HUNTINGDON'S AFFECTION FOR HER STUDENTS.—ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.—INTERVIEW OF THE COUNTESS WITH THE KING AND QUEEN.—PETITION AGAINST SUBSCRIPTION TO THE THIRTY-NINE ARTICLES.—THE DISSENTERS.—LORD CHATHAM.

LADY Huntingdon now occupied a high and responsible position in the religious world. Her efforts had been steadily increasing, and were producing permanent results in all parts of the country. Numerous chapels had sprung up under her fostering care and liberality; and many students were itinerating throughout England and Wales to preach the gospel. Life and prosperity had reappeared among drooping congregations; and a mighty stimulus was given to the activity of the Christian church. The storms of controversy did not retard her efforts, but only led her to pray more fervently, and to labour more devotedly, for the wide diffusion of truth. Her college was a most valuable auxiliary to her, and enabled her to enter upon the fresh fields which were yearly opening, without subjecting herself to the control of episcopal authority. The Countess spent a considerable portion of every year at the College, that she might encourage the students with her presence, regulate the order of their itinerant journeys, and accompany them into the neighbouring districts, when any circumstance specially called for her assistance. The third anniversary of this valuable institution was attended by even greater crowds than on the preceding year. The usual services were held both previous to and after the 24th of August, and were very animated and encouraging; and the ministers returned to their spheres with gladdened hearts, and with renewed consecration of themselves to the service of the Lord. Soon after the anniversary, Lady Huntingdon made a tour in Wales with Mr. Rowlands and Mr. Williams. She spent two days at Brecknock, and then proceeded to Cærmarthen, at each of which places her ministers preached to large congregations in the churches and in the open air; then passed on to Haverford-West, and visited the town of Swansea.

This rising town had been for some time in a most benighted condition. A few Welsh and English people had been accustomed to assemble in a room in Castle Street for prayer; but their difference in language and sentiment destroyed their harmony, and eventually led to a separation. The remaining people were too poor to pay the small sum of three pounds a-year for the rent of the room; and the landlady threatened to eject them. Among them was a man of singular piety, named Benjamin Tucker, who was sincerely attached to the little meeting. He became the leading person there, and was informed that he must either defray the expenses of the room, or relinquish it next week. His poverty forbade him taking the responsibility upon himself, and the thought of abandoning the place distressed his mind. One day he strolled towards the bay; and falling on his knees prayed that God would help them in their difficulty. While thus engaged the name of the Countess occurred to him, as the most likely person to aid them in their distress. He prevailed upon a neighbouring farmer to write to the Countess, who was then staying at Britton Ferry, a few miles from Swansea; and as no reply was returned, he waited upon her Ladyship, who, after hearing his statement, kindly consented to send a student from Trevecca every Sabbath. After they had preached here for twelve months, it was thought that if a chapel were erected, a large congregation might soon be collected. Lady Huntingdon inquired of Tucker how many members could be obtained to form a society; and when informed there were only five, she expressed her surprise that such a small number should desire the erection of a chapel. Tucker promptly replied "There were but few in Cornelius' house, but at his invitation more came; and while Peter preached, the Holy Ghost fell upon all them that heard the word." The Countess was pleased with his remark, and promised her assistance in building a chapel.

Shortly after, Lady Huntingdon visited Swansea, and requested one of her students to preach under an elm tree which faced her lodgings in Chapel Street, while she sat at the open window, and listened to the sermon. Many interviews took place respecting the intended chapel; and when, on one occasion, her Ladyship remarked, that a room would be quite sufficient, Tucker declared, with his enthusiastic energy, that he would beg throughout the Principality, if she would not comply with their request. She yielded to his importunity; and through the kindness of Sir Herbert Mackworth, obtained the lease of one of the sand-banks on the Burrows for forty years, at a ground rent of £3. 14s. 0d. per annum, upon which she erected a neat and commodious chapel in the Gothic style. It was opened for public worship April 5th, 1789, by Mr. Rowlands, and the Rev. W. Taylor, one of her Ladyship's chaplains; and was for a time supplied by some of her best preachers. It proved a great blessing to the neighbourhood; frequently it was crowded to excess; and many there were deeply impressed with the truth, and decided for Christ. In 1796 the Rev. W. Kemp became the pastor of the people, and laboured there for twenty-five years with considerable success, till his removal to Cheshunt College, to fill the important office of theological tutor in that institution. He was succeeded by his intimate friend, the Rev. David Jones, who, about five years before the lease would have expired, having ascertained that the corporation were desirous of making a road by the side of the chapel, proposed to exchange a piece of land on the south side for that purpose for a small piece at the back of the chapel, and by great exertions secured to the trustees a new lease for ninety-nine years. Mr. Jones was soon laid aside by ill-health, which was but slightly improved by his travels in France, and in 1825 he resigned his charge at Swansea, and became the classical tutor at Cheshunt, but died a few weeks after he had entered upon his office. The chapel was then supplied by various ministers in the Connexion, till the year 1838, when the Rev. Thomas Dodd became the pastor of the church, under whose ministry the chapel was greatly enlarged, and schoolrooms built. He removed to Worcester in 1852; and the Rev. J. Whitby is now the stated minister of her Ladyship's chapel at Swansea.

The labours of the students from Trevecca obtained the sanction of the Great Head of the Church. In September 1771, Lady Huntingdon received an anonymous letter, which described the town of Margate as a very licentious place, particularly in the summer, and requested her to send some of her ministers to preach the gospel to the benighted people. One of her senior students, Mr. William Aldridge, undertook the duty, and chose as his fellow-worker, Mr. Joseph Cook, an eminently zealous preacher, who ultimately died in the missionary field in

America. They arrived safely in the Isle of Thanet; and being unknown to any person in Margate, they stood in the open street, and proclaimed Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the world. Curiosity soon attracted a large congregation; and while some scoffed at them, and departed, many were deeply convinced of their sins, and led to the feet of Jesus. The success they met with induced these servants of God to extend the sphere of their labours; and before long, the whole island resounded with the preaching of the gospel.

The report of their usefulness reached the town of Dover, whither these two faithful ministers were invited by a few persons, who were concerned for the revival of religion. Mr. Aldridge began the public ministry of her Ladyship's Connexion in Dover. He was a man of fearless character; and to create greater excitement in the place, he delivered his first address in the market-place, from a chair borrowed at a neighbouring barber's shop. The congregation at the parish church was just returning from the afternoon service, and speedily collected around him, and formed a large audience. The preacher was soon attacked by a mob, and assailed by missiles; and as he had succeeded in creating an excitement, he abruptly terminated his address, and begged the attendance of his audience in the evening at the old meeting-house. That chapel had long been deserted by a congregation, and shut up; and had been procured by the persons who invited her Ladyship's ministers to Dover. Aldridge was there free from interruption; and he preached to the people with such power that many groaned under the conviction of sin, and cried out to God for salvation. As the prospect of success was encouraging, it was agreed that Aldridge and Cook should supply Margate and Dover constantly, and change every week. The appearance of Cook attracted considerable attention; his youth, his energy, and address caused numbers to flock to hear him, and his first sermon was made useful to many souls, especially to Mr. W. Atwood, who became an active village preacher, and eventually the pastor of a Baptist Church in the adjacent town of Folkstone. Such was the origin of Lady Huntingdon's Connexion at Dover and Margate, where spacious chapels have since been erected.

The labours of Aldridge and Cook were not confined to these two spots. At Folkstone they met with much encouragement, and formed the nucleus of a church and congregation in that town. At Deal they encountered great opposition, particularly from Dr. Carter, perpetual curate of St. George's Church, who made many attempts to create a disturbance, and at length addressed a sharp remonstrance to the Countess for daring to intrude on his parish! They also visited Canterbury, preached in the streets, and collected many of the fruits of the labours of Whitefield and Wesley. They were greatly assisted by Charles and Edward Perronet, sons of the venerable vicar of Shoreham, who were at this time residents at Canterbury. Edward Perronet was afterwards employed by her Ladyship in the work of the ministry, and preached with considerable success in many of her chapels; but when she remonstrated with him on his openly-avowed hostility to the Established Church, he quitted her service, and preached in a dissenting chapel. The congregation at Canterbury steadily increased; and a beautiful chapel was erected under the auspices of Lady Ann Erskine, and opened November 26th, 1797, by the Rev. Dr. Haweis. The services were well attended; and many of the people came from a great distance to hear the gospel. Some of the members of the Canterbury society afterwards procured a chapel at Ashford, about twelve miles from the city, which was opened October 10th, 1823, by the Rev. J. Bloomfield. Several other places in Kent were visited by Aldridge and her Ladyship's ministers, particularly Maidstone, Greenhithe, Dartford, and Lewisham, where congregations were gathered, and chapels erected.

The students from Trevecca were also usefully engaged in the Midland Counties of England. In 1771, they first visited Staffordshire and Warwickshire; and as there were few pious and faithful ministers of Christ in those parts, their sphere was extensive, and their labours heavy. At Birmingham, Wednesbury, Walsall, Bilston, Wolverhampton, and many other places, they preached in the open air; and though they often met with rough usage, they never sustained any serious injury. Their way had been somewhat prepared by the former visits of the Countess and her ministers to these places; and God smiled upon their labours, and made them successful. The influence of Lord Dartmouth was also of essential service to them on many occasions. Derbyshire had long been the scene of her Ladyship's efforts; and her students diligently cultivated that field of usefulness. Mr. Thomas Jones preached at Alvaston and Melbourn, stood up several times in the market-place at Derby, and hired a large school-room at the back of the Town Hall. The Countess shortly after sent Mr. Griffiths to his assistance; and they went out together to scatter the seed of divine truth. Whenever they came to Derby, they employed the public crier to announce their intention of preaching; aud in this way they succeeded in raising a large congregation in this important town. Mr. Middleton from the College supplied there for a short time, and was succeeded by his fellow-student, Mr. Bryson, a popular preacher, but too impetuous and rash long to maintain peace. A separation ensued; and Thomas Wilson, Esq., of Islington, purchased premises in the Brookside to enable the seceders to erect a spacious meeting-house. The students also frequently preached in an old Presbyterian chapel at Ashbourn, and gathered a congregation. A neat and commodious chapel was afterwards erected here at the sole expense of Mr. John Cooper, of London, a native of Ashbourn, which was opened, May 20th, 1801. He afterwards erected a minister's house, and seven alms-houses for poor aged women; liberally endowed them; and invested the property in the hands of the trustees of Lady Huntingdon's College.

Several parts of Dorsetshire, and Devonshire were also visited by the students, where they preached the simple gospel of Christ, wherever they could obtain a congregation. They met with much opposition from the worldly-minded clergy, and some of the dissenting ministers, who were unwilling to be aroused from their lethargy, and to see their people attending another preacher. The blessing of the Lord attended the labours of these students wherever they itinerated; sinners were convinced of their evil ways, and directed to the Lamb of God; and the faith and love of God's people were stimulated. They were the pioneers of many laborious and useful ministers of Christ; and the revival of religion in many parishes, and the formation of several Independent Churches can be traced to their exertions. It could easily be shown, that the students itinerated in every county in England; but the foregoing details are sufficient to indicate the importance of the work which Lady Huntingdon was accomplishing, the demands which must have been made on her time and attention to regulate the itinerancy, and the value of her College in furnishing able and devoted missionaries to traverse England and Wales, and evangelize the country. No wonder that his Majesty, George III, exclaimed, "I wish there was a Lady Huntingdon in every diocese in the kingdom."

The Countess manifested the most sincere affection for her faithful students. She fostered their piety, stimulated their zeal, provided for their wants, cheered them with frequent letters, and watched over them with maternal tenderness whenever they were sick. The Tabernacle at Bristol had been left destitute of regular supplies, since the death of Whitefield; and the managers applied to Lady Huntingdon for the services of her ministers. She repaired to Clifton, accompanied by Mr. Shipman, who preached at the Tabernacle with great zeal and success. From Bristol, he was sent to Haverford-West, where he broke a blood-vessel, and was thrown upon a bed of sickness. Many kind friends rallied around him, and attempted to improve his health by change of scene and air; but to little purpose; and he felt that his days here were numbered, and his labours ended. Lady Huntingdon took the deepest interest in him during his trying illness, and wrote to him an affectionate letter to cheer him in his affliction with the consolations of the gospel. Three months after her letter was sent, the heart it was designed to cheer, ceased to beat. He broke another blood-vessel; a violent cough caused him to expectorate blood; and after a few days, his joyful spirit departed for the celestial regions to enjoy the presence of his Saviour, October 31st, 1771.

It was about this period Lady Huntingdon became prominent in an affair which attracted considerable attention. Dr. Cornwallis, Archbishop of Canterbury, had eclipsed all his predecessors in the sacred office by the magnificent style in which he lived. During the winter, his palace was crowded by gay and fashionable society; balls and routs were frequently held there; and his wife took the lead in the world of fashion by the splendor of her equipages and entertainments. These proceedings called forth the indignation of those in whom there still remained a sense of propriety; and even the gay visitors at the palace could not restrain their wit and satire at the inconsistency of such scenes in an archiepiscopal residence, When the affair was every day becoming more serious, Lady Huntingdon felt that the interests of religion, and the honour of the Church, demanded that some attempt should be made to wipe away such a scandal from the nation. She resolved to visit the Archbishop in a most private manner, and remonstrate with him on the impropriety of such proceedings. Accompanied by the Marquis of Townshend, a distant relative of the Archbishop, she waited on his Grace and represented to him the injury he was inflicting on the religious feeling of the country. His Grace listened with patience, and kept back his ire; but Mrs. Cornwallis burst into a passion, and ridiculed and denounced Lady Huntingdon in all her fashionable circles. The Countess made another attempt privately, through Mr. Madan's brother, who had married his Grace's niece; but the Archbishop refused to listen to the warning, and most fiercely denounced her and all who sympathized with her, as hypocrites or fanatics.

Lady Huntingdon felt too deeply concerned for the honour of religion to allow the affair to drop; she, therefore, applied for a private audience with the King, which was most graciously granted. Accompanied by Lord Dartmouth and the Duchess of Ancaster, she repaired to the Palace at Kew, at the hour appointed, where their Majesties received her with a cordial welcome. She narrated the motives which urged her to take the course she had adopted, and how she had been treated by his Grace. The King replied with great earnestness, "Madam, the feelings you have discovered, and the conduct you have adopted on this occasion, are highly creditable to you. The Archbishop's behaviour has been slightly hinted to me already; but now that I have a certainty of his proceedings, and most ungracious conduct towards your Ladyship, after your trouble in remonstrating with him, I shall interpose my authority, and see what that will do towards reforming such indecent practices."

Lady Huntingdon remained with their Majesties for more than an hour, and conversed with them on many topics. The King told her that he was acquainted with her proceedings, and complimented her on her many benevolent actions, and on her zeal for the revival of true religion. He said, "I have been told so many odd stories of your Ladyship, that I am free to confess that I felt a great degree of curiosity to see if you were at all like other women; and I am happy in having an opportunity of assuring your Ladyship of the very good opinion I have of you, and how very highly I estimate your character, your zeal, and abilities, which cannot be consecrated to a more noble purpose." He then referred to her ministers, who, he understood, were eloquent preachers. The Bishops were jealous of them; and the King related a conversation he had lately had with a learned prelate. He had complained of the conduct of some of her Ladyship's students and ministers, who had created a sensation in his diocese; and his Majesty replied, "Make bishops of them—make bishops of them." "That *might* be done," replied the prelate, "but, please your Majesty, we cannot make a bishop of Lady Huntingdon." The Queen rejoined, "It would be a lucky circumstance if you could, for she puts you all to shame." "Well," said the King, "see if you cannot imitate the zeal of these men." His Lordship made some reply which displeased the King, who exclaimed with great animation, "*I wish there was a Lady Huntingdon in every diocese in the kingdom!*" That Bishop never afterwards made his appearance at court.

Before Lady Huntingdon departed, the Queen insisted on her taking some refreshment, and affectionately inquired after Lady Chesterfield, who was a great favourite with her Majesty. The King touchingly referred to his father, and said, "I remember seeing your Ladyship when I was young. You then frequented the court circle; and I cannot forget that you were a favourite with my revered father, the Prince of Wales." A few days after the interview, the King addressed a letter to the Archbishop, expressing his regret that such scenes should have taken place in his palace, and the hope that he will immediately suppress them, under pain of incurring his displeasure.

The King thenceforth entertained a high opinion of Lady Huntingdon. A short time after the interview, he said to Lord Dartmouth, "I was much taken with her appearance and manner; there is something so noble, so commanding, and withal so engaging about her, that I am quite captivated with her Ladyship. She appears to possess talents of a superior order, is clever, well-informed, and has all the ease and politeness belonging to a woman of rank. With all the enthusiasm ascribed to her, she is an honour to her sex, and the nation." On one occasion, Lady Huntingdon became the subject of an animated conversation at court; when a lady of high rank observed that the most charitable construction she could put upon the actions of the Countess was by affirming she must be deranged. The King, who had been eagerly listening, replied with great earnestness—"Deranged, Madam, did you say?" "Yes, please your Majesty," said her Ladyship, "for no one could act as she does who was not insane." She then related the particulars of the remonstrance of the Countess with the Archbishop, The Duchess of Ancaster gave a significant look at the King; and his Majesty, with the Queen, laughed heartily. The Duchess of Hamilton, who was present, feared that the Lady would plunge deeper into the difficulty, and motioned her to be silent; but the King, perceiving it, demanded of her Ladyship what Mrs. Cornwallis had said of Lady Huntingdon, and if his Grace had given her his blessing. "His blessing!" exclaimed the astonished Lady, "no, indeed, please your Majesty; she had no right to accept any such favour. I don't know what *I* might not have said had she intruded herself upon *me* in a similar manner." She then turned to the Duchess of Ancaster, who was smiling, and said, "if your Majesty wishes further information of Lady Huntingdon's practices, I dare say the Duchess of Ancaster can give you every information, as *she* is a great friend of her Ladyship." "I am proud of the friendship of such a woman," replied the Duchess, "and know of nothing to condemn, but much to commend, in the Countess of Huntingdon." The Queen, perceiving that the Lady was growing angry, observed that she had lately derived much pleasure from the society of Lady Huntingdon, whom she considered a very sensible, clever, and good woman. The Lady was astonished; and was about to withdraw with vexation and shame, when the King came to her, and kindly assured her that she had been greatly deceived as to the character of Lady Huntingdon. He asked her if she had ever seen her, or ever been in her company; and when she replied in the negative, he gave her this sensible advice, "Never form your opinion of any one from the ill-natured remarks and censures of others. Judge for yourself; and you have my leave to tell everybody how highly I think of Lady Huntingdon."*

The Countess was always actuated by a religious-patriotic spirit. While she was doing her utmost to spread evangelical truth throughout the country, she kept her eye on the movements of the senate, lest any enactment injurious to religion should be adopted. About this period an event occurred which called forth her most active exertions. An association was formed among some of the clergy and laity of the Established Church, for the purpose of making application to Parliament, praying that a declaration of assent to the sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures might be substituted for subscription to the

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* Life and Times, vol. ii., p. 280 et seq.

Thirty-nine Articles. Lady Huntingdon was decidedly attached to the Established Church, and viewed this as an attempt to subvert her fundamental doctrines, and the great principles of the Reformation. She, therefore, exerted herself with great ardour to prevent the success of the measure. Petitions poured in from all parts against it; and great opposition was anticipated from the University of Oxford, Lord North, the First Lord of the Treasury, and the whole body of Methodists and evangelical clergy. The association saw the rising storm, and determined to present their petition at once. There was no time, therefore, to be lost; and Lady Huntingdon pressed all her friends into her service to oppose the measure. She personally waited on several members of the House to secure their support, and met with a most flattering reception. Lord North assured her he would oppose the petition, and Edmund Burke, the most distinguished ornament of the English senate, sent her Ladyship a letter, promising his aid. The petition was presented in the House of Commons, February 6th, 1772. The Association found some difficulty in obtaining a suitable person to introduce it, but at length prevailed upon Sir William Meredith to present it, and speak on its behalf. The debate upon it was a very animated one; but ultimately the House rejected it by a large majority, the numbers being two hundred and seventeen *against*, and only seventy-one *for* receiving it.

The result was very gratifying to the Countess. Though she was the staunch advocate of toleration and religious freedom, and manifested in her example a noble catholicity of spirit, she strongly objected to the principles of the petition. She was aware that Parliament could not grant relief to those who had already subscribed, as it had no power to nullify oaths which had been sworn; and urged that reason and justice would be violated, if those who were not beneficed were permitted to seize the emoluments of the church, without believing her tenets, or complying with her laws. She perfectly agreed with Burke that, while the Association professed to belong to the Establishment, and enjoyed its revenues, no hardship was inflicted upon them, in requiring some bond of agreement among its members, such as the subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles. The intelligent observer will not fail to detect the existence of the feeling, which prompted this petition, among several of the high-church clergy of the present day.

In the course of the debate on this petition, several favourable sentiments were expressed respecting the hardship which Dissenting ministers then had to endure, in being obliged, under heavy penalties, to subscribe to the Articles of the Establishment; and several members declared their readiness to support a bill for their relief. This favourable disposition occasioned a meeting of ministers in London to consider the propriety of petitioning Parliament to release them from their burdens. Lady Huntingdon had for more than thirty years cultivated a close intimacy with some of the leading orthodox dissenters; many of whom were as strongly attached to the doctrinal Articles of the Church, as its strictest members. Her Ladyship's well-known principles, her catholicity, and her intimate friendship with many of these ministers, secured her cordial approbation of the measure, though she deeply regretted that those most active in it professed theological and political opinions, with which she had little sympathy. The introduction of the measure gave great alarm to the strict Church-party, who began to imagine that there was some deep design to overthrow the Established Religion. They accordingly opposed it warmly, but found the house decidedly in favour of the bill. It passed through the Commons by a large majority, but was lost in the Lords on its second reading; and thus justice towards the Dissenters was for a time delayed.

It was during this debate that Dr. Drummond, Archbishop of York, attacked the Dissenting Ministers as men of ambition, which called forth the memorable reply from the celebrated Lord Chatham. He said, "The Dissenting Ministers are represented as men of close ambition; they are so, my Lords; and their ambition is to keep close to the college of fishermen, not of cardinals; and to the doctrine of inspired apostles, not to decrees of interested and aspiring bishops. They contend for a scriptural creed, and spiritual worship; we have a Calvinistic creed, a Popish liturgy, and an Arminian clergy. The Reformation has laid open the Scriptures to all; let not the bishops shut them again. Laws in support of ecclesiastical power are pleaded, which it would shock humanity to execute. It is said that religious sects have done great mischief when they were not kept under restraint; but history affords no proof that sects have been mischievous, when they were not oppressed and persecuted by the ruling church."

CHAPTER XX. A.D. 1772—1773.

WHITEFIELD'S WILL.—CORNELIUS WINTER.—AMERICAN MISSIONS.—SELECTION OF MISSIONARIES.—EMBARKATION.—SUCCESS IN AMERICA.—DESTRUCTION OF THE ORPHAN HOUSE BY FIRE.—AMERICAN WAR.—SIERRA LEONE MISSIONS.—LADY HUNTINGDON AT BATH.—REV. THOMAS WILLS.—CHAPELS AT YORK AND HULL.—REV. JOSEPH MILNER—DEATH OF LORD AND LADY CHESTERFIELD.—THE COUNTESS DELITZ.—HOWELL HARRIS.—OPENING OF WORCESTER CHAPEL.

The death of George Whitefield was an important event in the career of Lady Huntingdon. Though it deprived her of his valuable services, and for some time cast a gloom over her circle, it opened up to her a large field of usefulness which she was determined to cultivate with the greatest assiduity. Her mind had long been deeply interested in the spiritual welfare of America; she had waited for an opportunity of sending forth missionaries to the Indians, and had some years before expressed the hope "to have it in my power to extend some aid to this interesting people." Early in 1771, Mr. Cornelius Winter, who had accompanied Whitefield to America, arrived in England with her chaplain's will, which bequeathed to Lady Huntingdon the landed estates and buildings connected with the Orphan House in Georgia, that she might carry on and extend his benevolent intentions towards the African negroes.

Mr. Winter also brought letters from the Governor of the province, and the rector of Savannah, recommending him to the Bishop of London for ordination, that he might return to the colony, and labour as an episcopal clergyman. He obtained an interview with the Bishop, who interrogated him as to his proceedings in America, and his connection with Whitefield. The prelate pronounced a very harsh sentence upon him, denounced his labours as illegal, refused to listen to the petition of his friends in Georgia, and denied him episcopal ordination. Mr. Winter used every exertion among the friends of the Bishop to induce him to entertain his application; he again waited upon him, stated his peculiar situation, and said, "I cannot think of returning to America in my present condition." His Lordship, however, was inexorable; and Winter was obliged to write to his friends in America, and communicate to them the failure of his mission. Their disappointment was very great; they had indulged the hope of having pious ministers of the Church of England labouring among them; and they condemned strongly the impolicy and bigotry of the prelate, who forced them to accept the services of dissenting ministers, by refusing to ordain a man who was eminently qualified for the work, and was acquainted with the peculiarities of the colony.

James Habersham, Esq., the President of the Council, and an early and intimate friend of Whitefield, was appointed the executor of his affairs in Georgia, and in case he survived her Ladyship, was to receive the estate of the Orphan House. The Governor and the Council of Georgia had been led to expect that, on the death of Whitefield, the Institution would be placed under their control, and were rather surprised when they learnt the tenor of his will; but the name of Lady Huntingdon was quite sufficient to secure their confidence, and sympathy.

The refusal of the Bishop to ordain Mr. Winter caused

Lady Huntingdon great uneasiness. The Orphan House was by no means in a flourishing condition; the number of inmates was small; and there was very little indication of religion among them. The venerable Countess, therefore, directed her chief efforts towards this spot; and with all the ardour and activity of youth, commenced her labours among the sable sons of Africa, thousands of whom at the present time pronounce her name with affection and gratitude. She secured the assistance of Governor Wright and President Habersham, and purchased additional estates in the colony; and after settling satisfactorily all the legal affairs of the Institution, made vigorous preparations to send over a President and Teacher for the Orphan House, and such students as were willing to devote themselves as missionaries to the heathen. She wrote to all her students and ministers labouring in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, and inclosed a printed circular, stating that, her affairs in America being fully settled, she intends to provide for the wants of the Orphan House, and to furnish missionaries to carry the gospel, not only into the provinces, but also into the back settlements, and among the heathen tribes. She requests all her friends to meet her at the College early in October to arrange this matter, and the plan of home efforts. The circular concludes, "As Lady Huntingdon supposes this the most important event of her whole life, so all that bear her any regard, in connexion with her, she must intreat to be present; and is bound to believe great blessings from the Lord Jesus Christ will descend upon all who are made willing to help her with their presence and prayers."

The students accordingly hastened to Trevecca, where a series of solemn services were held to commemorate the joyful event of sending forth missionaries to the heathen, many years before the first missionary society was organized in England. Lady Huntingdon had been staying for a short time at Oathall; and on her way to Wales, she visited Bath and Bristol. On the 2nd of October, she left for Trevecca in the company of Messrs. Shirley, Piercy the intended President, Lloyd, Wilson, and others; and was met by some of her students at Abergavenny, where she passed the night. In the morning the whole party set off to the College. Several of her students started to meet their noble patroness on the road; and when the entire company approached the College, the inmates welcomed them with the stirring hymn, "*Welcome, welcome, blessed servants*." At length the day for the selection of the students arrived; and many willingly offered themselves for the service of the Lord in America. They were solemnly dedicated to the missionary work, October 9th, 1772, a day which was set apart at all her Ladyship's chapels for earnest prayer to God that his blessing might rest on her enterprise. She immediately wrote to her friends in America, and requested them to have everything prepared for receiving the President, the Master, and the Students.

The missionaries embarked on the vessel which was to convey them to their destination, on the 27th of October, and sailed down the river to Gravesend. A vast company had assembled to witness their departure, and to bid them an affectionate farewell. The sides of the river were crowded with eager spectators; and many were the silent prayers breathed to heaven for the success of the mission. At length, the moment of separation came; the last adieu was uttered; the mariners steadily plied their oars; and the boats swiftly glided towards the vessel. The multitudes watched them for some time; waved their hats and handkerchiefs as a final recognition; and turned from the scene with mingled joy and sadness. The missionaries were deeply affected with their last interview; they felt the pang which most feel in bidding farewell to their native land, perhaps for ever; but they also felt the inspiring influence of the noble object before them, and were prepared to count all things but loss for Christ. They had consecrated themselves to him; and they now braved the dangers of the deep, and the perils of a foreign clime, that they might become the heralds of his salvation, and the promoters of the happiness of man.

The vessel remained at Gravesend for some days; and Mr. Piercy embraced the opportunity of once more preaching the glad tidings of salvation to his countrymen. He returned to London; and on the ensuing Sabbath preached to very crowded congregations at the Tottenham-court chapel, and the Tabernacle. During the week, he preached a farewell sermon at Woolwich, and to an immense multitude on Tower Hill. At length the anchor was weighed; a gentle breeze sprang up, and carried them into the channel. It soon veered into a contrary direction, and detained the vessel in the Downs off Dover. Mr. Cook, one of the missionaries, wished to bid farewell to his friends in that town, and obtained permission from the captain to land. He surprised the congregation by his unexpected arrival, and preached a glowing sermon to them; and on the following Sunday several of the students resolved to land and preach in Dover. It was unfortunate for them that they did so; for in the night a brisk gale sprang up, the anchor was weighed, and the ship sailed without them. With the exception of two who remained in England, they, however, proceeded to their destination by the next vessel; and after a prosperous voyage, they all safely arrived in America, thankful to God for his merciful kindness, and eager to commence the work of the Lord.* Lady Huntingdon had taken great pains to secure the comfort and happiness of her labourers; she furnished them with everything necessary; and drew up certain regulations for them to observe on their voyage, that they might foster each other's piety and zeal. She recommended them to hold daily public service, and to set apart certain portions of the day for prayer, conversation, and reading, that they might be better prepared to commence their work on their arrival at Georgia.

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* Their names were Piercy, the President, and Crosse, Master of the Orphan House; and Messrs. John Cosson, William White, Joseph Cook, Daniel Roberts, Thomas Jones, Thomas Hill, and Lewis Richards, Missionaries.

They were received with the greatest cordiality by the friends of Whitefield; and immediately proceeded to the Orphan House, which had been fitted up for their reception. They could not, however, long remain inactive, or silent. Their warm hearts glowed with the love of Christ; their tongues had often proclaimed the Saviour in the towns and villages of England; and they, therefore, at once commenced their efforts in their new sphere. They drew up a comprehensive plan for their guidance, travelled to all parts of the country, preached to many congregations in the provinces, appeared among the settlers in remote districts, visited the wandering Indian tribes, and preached the gospel to the negroes. Their labours were eminently successful; and many from each district were converted to Christ, and rejoiced in his salvation. The tidings of their zeal and success soon spread far and wide; and invitations to visit dark places became more numerous than they could meet. Lady Huntingdon says:—

'America is honoured by the mission sent over. The province of Georgia have made proposals to build a church at their own expense, and present me with it, that the College of Georgia may have their ministry in that part honoured. The invitations I have for our ministry in various parts of America are so kind and affectionate, that it looks as if we were to have our way free through the whole continent. * * * My last letters from America inform me our way appears to be made to the Cherokee Indians; and in all the back settlements we are assured the people will joyfully build us churches at their own expense, and present them to us, to settle perpetually for our use. Some great, *very* great work is intended by the Lord among the heathen. Should this appear I should rejoice *to go myself* to establish a College for the Indian nations. *I can't help thinking but before I die the Lord will have me there, if only to make coats and garments for the poor Indians. I am looking when some from among us shall be called to the* JEWS; but the Gentiles by us will surely hear the voice of the Lord."

What significant language is this, from the lips of the venerable Countess! She was now in her sixty-seventh year, yet her zeal and energy were apparently increasing with her years! Her present labours were quite sufficient to occupy several persons of average ability; but they did not satisfy her longing heart. Her mind was ever devising some fresh scheme by which she could glorify God, and successively contemplated the accomplishment of those mighty designs which are now being realized by established Societies. She was far in advance of her times, and represented in her own person the home missionary, the foreign missionary, and the missionary to the Jews! The Christian Church now feels that it is her solemn duty to support those societies which are formed to carry out these objects.

The fair prospect in America was soon blighted, and covered with desolation. Her Ladyship's hope was fixed on the Orphan House, as the centre, whence the influence of civilization and religion should stream into the benighted districts. It had been established by Whitefield for the protection of poor orphans, the education of negroes, and the preparation of some of the young men as instructors and preachers. During his lifetime, he had manifested the greatest interest for the African race; and though he had purchased a number of slaves for his estates, he had treated them with the greatest kindness, and was the friend of the negro throughout the colony. After his death, the managers expended considerable sums of money in purchasing fresh slaves to work the rice and indigo plantations connected with the College; and when Lady Huntingdon came into possession of the property, there were no less than fifty negroes on the estate; and her Ladyship directed the first remittance of money to be expended in the purchase of a female slave to be named after her Selina! The claims of the poor slaves, and the horrid brutality to which they were subjected had not yet been brought before the people of England by their great champions, Clarkson and Wilberforce; and the Countess was unwittingly encouraging the trade by her example. It must, however, in justice be recorded that, when the venerable Anthony Benezet, the friend of the negro, wrote to her Ladyship, representing the horrors of the slave traffic, which her managers were encouraging, she expressed her determination no longer to countenance it, but to use every means to prevent it.

The affairs at Savannah appear to have been wretchedly managed; and during her Ladyship's lifetime, her American business occasioned her great anxiety, expense, and disappointment. Not many months after the arrival of the missionaries, the Orphan House was accidentally destroyed by fire; and though no lives were lost, it caused the destruction of many thousand pounds' worth of property. This, however, was but the commencement of her troubles. The deadly war between England and America soon put an end to the efforts of her missionaries, and obliged them to leave the country; though Mr. Piercy could not leave till the reduction of Charleston by the English in 1780, when he found an opportunity of returning to Europe. During the time he had been in Georgia, he had not forwarded to her

Ladyship any account of her affairs; and she accordingly wrote to him soon after his arrival at Cork, and requested him to furnish her with an abstract of his accounts, that she might refute some insinuations which had been made against his character. After many delays, he repaired to Bath in 1781, and presented to her such an explanation of her affairs in Georgia as satisfied her mind. Shortly after, however, several things occurred which led her to suspect that all was not right in his accounts; and in a long letter to her niece Mrs. Mills, she enters into the various transactions, and shows how he had appropriated all the revenues of the estates during the six years he was there. She says, "My poor heart is sadly perplexed in this affair."

The treaty of peace in 1783 enabled the Countess to send over another person to manage the affairs of the Orphan House, plantations, and her own property. She now resolved to convert the revenues of all the American estates into a fund for the establishment of a mission to the Indians on a large scale. A plan was drawn out, and students were to have been sent from Trevecca to carry it into effect; but the Americans had taken possession of the property during the war; and though her manager remained there till her death, and she vested the property in trust by her will, the General Assembly appointed their own trustees, and finally retained possession of the whole.

The efforts of Lady Huntingdon in America, however, were productive of the happiest results. Several of the negroes were converted to the Lord, and were the means of introducing the gospel into their own country. In the dreadful conflict between England and the colonies many of the blacks had taken part with the British troops; and soon after the termination of the war, the government sent them to Nova Scotia, where they were instructed by the Rev. Messrs. Fomage, John Marrant, and other of her Ladyship's ministers. In 1792 a large number of these negroes gladly embraced the opportunity, offered them by the government, of settling at Sierra Leone in Africa, where a colony of liberated slaves had been founded. They quickly raised chapels, and appointed preachers; and have continued to worship the Lord in the mode taught them by her ministers. They have extended their labours in all directions; erected spacious chapels, opened schools, and established an organized band of native preachers. It is to this interesting people the attention of her Missionary Society is directed, that by aiding this devoted band of negroes, from Sierra Leone the gospel may spread into the interior of Africa, and subjugate the tribes to Jesus.

While Lady Huntingdon was thus promoting the spread of the gospel in America, she was by no means unmindful of the claims of home. Her College was full of earnest students, who were engaged every Sabbath in preaching the glad tidings of salvation; and her laborious ministers were zealously proclaiming the gospel at her most important chapels. She never remained long in one place; but visited the localities where she had erected places of worship, that she might witness the success of her plans, and cheer the people with her presence. In the month of September 1772, she went to Bath with Mr. Shirley, where she was introduced to the Rev. Thomas Wills, curate of St. Agnes, Cornwall, who became a celebrated preacher in her Connexion. He was a man of great power in the pulpit, and was indefatigable in his parochial exertions. His church was crowded with eager listeners, who were noted for their early attendance; and he frequently preached to thousands of hearers in the open air. His continued labours so impaired his health, that he was recommended to Bath for the benefit of the waters; where he often preached at her Ladyship's chapel, and soon became extremely popular in the city.

Two years after he renewed his visit, and preached with great success at the chapel. It was then he became connected with Lady Huntingdon, by his marriage with her niece, Miss Selina Wheeler, a pious and devoted young lady, who had for some years resided with her, and with whom she was a great favourite.

The number of Lady Huntingdon's chapels was rapidly increasing in all parts of the country; and numerous applications were made for her to erect new places of worship in dark and populous localities. Shortly after the establishment of her College in Wales, she erected a chapel in College Street, York; which was regularly supplied by students from Trevecca till after her death, when a new chapel was erected, and the people formed into an independent church, with Mr. Wydown as their pastor. Her students were also invited to Hull by Mr. Edward Riddell, who had separated from the church, and represented to Lady Huntingdon that a new place of worship was much needed in that locality. She sent students to preach to the people, and erected a neat chapel which was speedily filled with hearers. Among the converts was a person who held a high position in Hull, and was connected with a learned dignitary of the church.

The Rev. Joseph Milner was a native of Leeds, and had been elected the head-master of the grammar school, and afternoon lecturer of the principal church at Hull. His school rapidly increased; and he won, by his integrity and zeal, the esteem of the chief inhabitants, and the favour of the corporation of the town. He was, however, spiritually dark, and had confused notions of the plan of salvation. One day, he was led to hear one of her Ladyship's students, whose discourse so impressed his heart that he often attended their ministry at the chapel. The truth enlightened his soul; he saw his benighted condition; the doctrines of the gospel rose clearly before his mind; and the love of Christ warmed his heart. He made many inquiries respecting Lady Huntingdon, her College, doctrines, chapels, &c.; and intimated a desire to correspond with her. She accordingly wrote to him; and afterwards maintained a spirited correspondence with this eminent minister.

The light which had shone upon his mind was speedily reflected in his pulpit ministrations. His hearers soon discovered the change which had passed over him; and though convinced of his earnestness and piety, they quickly manifested their hostility. The higher classes deserted his ministry, except when once a year, he preached officially as chaplain to the Mayor; but the people heard him gladly, and crowded to his church. He speedily became the object of sarcasm and reproach; he was banished from the circles where formerly he had been welcomed; and was called a Methodist, an enthusiast, a madman! He, however, persevered in his course; he laboured more diligently in his school and church, and had the happiness of seeing that, after many years of storm, the prosperous gale had set in, and that he had regained the affection of his former friends. A few years after his conversion, one of the students, William Tyler, came to reside at Hull for a short time to preach at the Independent chapel. Mr. Milner became intimate with this young man, and in the course of their friendship he found that his mind was inclined towards the Establishment, and proposed that he should go to Cambridge, and obtain episcopal ordination. Mr. Tyler consented to do so with the approbation of his patroness; and Milner wrote to Lady Huntingdon, and stated his reasons for urging this upon his attention. She returned a long letter encouraging him to go on in the work of the Lord, relinquishing her claims on Mr. Tyler, and testifying to his zeal and abilities; and presented an account of the pleasing state of her affairs. "I have much pleasure," she says, "to tell you that the work amongst us is very generally on the increase; and very many in the large towns where I have chapels have felt the saving efficacy of redeeming love, and the quickening grace of the Holy Ghost. * * * It affords me the most cordial satisfaction to see a goodly number of godly young men offering themselves to the service of our adorable Saviour, of whose talents and piety I judge most favourably. The school of the prophets at my beloved Trevecca affords great advantages to young men, as preparatory to the work, and so easy of access; but the labourers are still few, and the harvest plenteous."

During the year 1773, Lady Huntingdon lost several of her valuable friends by death. Lord Chesterfield had been for a long time in a state of great feebleness and despondency. His intimate friendship with the Earl of Huntingdon often brought him into the company of her Ladyship, who used every opportunity of reminding him of the value of religion. He had manifested great kindness to her and her children, and had so often attended the preaching of her ministers that she indulged the hope that his heart had been impressed with the truth. His last moments dissipated her cherished desires. He refused to see Rowland Hill, afterwards chaplain to his widow; triflingly called death but a leap in the dark; and closed his earthly career, March 24th, 1773. Lady Huntingdon was with him a short time before he died, and says, "the blackness of darkness, accompanied by every gloomy horror, thickened most awfully around his dying moments."

Lady Chesterfield suffered great anguish of mind, and survived her lord but a few years. She had been distinguished among the noble circle of friends which surrounded Lady Huntingdon, by her devout piety, and her activity in the service of Christ. She had borne with meekness the reproaches of the fashionable and the gay, when she accompanied his Lordship to the court. The last time she visited the royal circle, she wore an elegant brown silk dress covered with silver flowers, which Lord Chesterfield had procured from the continent at great expense. His Majesty, George II, was well aware that her Ladyship was in the habit of attending the drawing-room services of Lady Huntingdon; and coming up to her, he said, smiling, "I know who chose that gown for you,—Mr. Whitefield; and I hear you have attended on him this year and a half." Lady Chesterfield replied, "Yes, I have, and like him much," though she afterwards regretted that she did not say more on the subject. She died September 16th, 1778. Lady Huntingdon was with her to the last, and witnessed her triumphant departure. The last words she uttered were the words of the publican; for taking the Countess' hand, she eagerly clasped it and exclaimed, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

The Countess Delitz, the sister of Lady Chesterfield, was another trophy of the grace of God, which had been secured at her Ladyship's residence. She had, with Lady Chesterfield, for many years been accustomed to throw open her mansion for the preaching of the gospel, where many distinguished ministers laboured with great success among the nobility. She died November 2nd, 1773.

Lady Huntingdon was at her beloved College during the summer, where she was called to part with her old friend and fellow-labourer, Howell Harris. In a letter to Romaine, dated July 29th, 1773, after recording the dying sayings of the saint, she says:—

"And thus this good man went home to rest. It is impossible to describe the grief that is manifested every where, on account of the death of Mr. Harris; he was so beloved, and so esteemed as the spiritual father of multitudes who were converted under his powerful preaching, and enabled to venture their souls upon an infinite Saviour, entirely depending on his righteousness for the acceptance of their persons and services. Truly his loss is felt at the College, where many were awakened by his lively ministry. The last time he preached at the College, there was as great a crowd as usual; and his preaching was as searching and as rousing as ever. * * * He spake as became the oracles of God in demonstration of the Spirit and of power; and especially when he came to his application, he addressed himself to the audience in such a tender, earnest, and moving manner, inciting us to come and be acquainted with the dear Redeemer, as melted the assembly into tears.

"On the day he was interred, we had some special seasons of Divine influence, both upon converted and unconverted. It was a day never to be forgotten; but, I think, ought to be remembered with holy wonder and holy gratitude by all who were present. Not fewer than *twenty thousand* people were assembled on the solemn occasion; and we had abundance of students in the College, and all the ministers and exhorters who collected from various parts to pay their last tribute to the remains of a great man. We had three stages erected, and nine sermons addressed to the vast multitudes, hundreds of whom were dissolved in tears. Fifteen clergymen were present, six of whom blew the gospel trumpet with great power and freedom. Though we had enjoyed much of the gracious presence of God in our assemblies before, yet, I think I never saw so much at any time as on that day; especially when the Lord's Supper was administered, God poured out his Spirit in a wonderful manner. Many old Christians told me they had never seen so much of the glory of the Lord, and the riches of his grace, nor felt so much of the power of the gospel before.

"I hope soon to open a chapel in Worcester. Lincolnshire and Kent promise great things. Mr. Townsend and Mr. Spencer are supplying at Bath, where the Spirit is most evidently with the word, and the work of the

Lord, through infinitely wonderful grace, is prospering in their hands. Lady Fanny Shirley has frequent meetings at her residence, and many of the nobility attend, some of whom have been led to cry, 'What must we do to be saved?' Mr. Shirley is labouring at Brighton, and his family are now with Lady Fanny at Bath. The work spreads amazingly in Gloucestershire. Mr. Milner is labouring with great zeal and boldness in Hull; there he meets with much obloquy and abuse. I have some students there supplying my chapel, whose ministry has been remarkably owned. * * * When you have a little leisure, Mr. Shirley will be glad of your assistance at Brighton. Mr. Madan and Mr. Venn are at Oathall; the latter I expect here this month,—also Mr. Toplady and Mr. Berridge."

Worcestershire had often enjoyed the benefit of the labours of her Ladyship's ministers, and the presence of Lady Huntingdon. In the city of Worcester, the people were very anxious to hear the gospel; and by the labours of Messrs Venn, Glascott, and others, nearly two hundred persons were impressed with the truth, and united in religious society. As the number increased with every fresh visit of her ministers, the people earnestly requested her to erect a chapel where they might regularly hear the glad tidings of salvation, which they could not then obtain in the established churches. She readily yielded to the request of the people; and about the year 1771, secured a spot of ground in Birdport-Street, a densely populated locality, where a suitable place of worship was erected by subscription and by a loan, the interest of which was paid by the Countess till the congregation could liquidate the whole. This chapel was opened by Mr. Shirley, October 31st, 1773. The place was crowded; multitudes went away, unable to gain admittance; and the services were remarkably blessed by the Lord.

For several years the chapel was supplied by students from Trevecca; and as the congregation steadily increased, it was determined to pull down the original chapel, and erect a more spacious edifice, which was opened in 1804. This new building was still further enlarged under the ministry of the Rev. E. Lake in 1815, when it was re-opened by the Rev. Rowland Hill, who preached to overflowing congregations. After a remarkably useful career of nearly thirty years, an unpleasantness arose between Mr. Lake and some of his congregation, which terminated in his leaving the chapel. It was then supplied by ministers of the Connexion till 1853, when the Rev. Thomas Dodd removed from Swansea to Worcester, through whose exertions the heavy debt, which for years had encumbered the place, has been removed, and the chapel repaired and beautified. There are several village stations connected with this place of worship, and the Sunday Schools are large and flourishing.

CHAPTER XXI. A.D. 1773—1774.

THE CONDITION OF IRELAND.—DUBLIN.—PLUNKET-STREET CHAPEL.—PERSECUTION.—ITINERANCY IN IRELAND.—LETTER OF THE COUNTESS.—ILLNESS OF LADY FANNY SHIRLEY.—LADY HUNTINGDON'S CHAPELS IN LONDON; EWER-STREET, PRINCESS-STREET, MULBERRY GARDENS.—TREVECCA COLLEGE.—ORDINATION OF MR. HAWKESWORTH.—HISTORY OF BRIGHTON CHAPEL.—THE CHAPEL AT CHICHESTER.—MR. PENTYCROSS.—CHAPEL AT WALLINGFORD.

THE spiritual condition of Ireland had early attracted the attention of Lady Huntingdon. She had listened with great satisfaction to the accounts which Whitefield and Wesley had given her of their labours in that benighted land, and had extended to many ministers there her protection and support. Messrs. Shirley and Townsend had preached the gospel in that country with great success, and had represented to her Ladyship the necessity of diligently cultivating that important field of Christian usefulness. The city of Dublin was the first spot she selected as the scene of her labours. It was in a most deplorable condition; Popery was openly vaunting itself, and oppressing the people; and the sound of the gospel was rarely heard in the Protestant churches. When her ministers, Shirley and Townsend, presented to her a statement of the condition of the city, she commissioned them to procure some commodious building, in which divine service might be conducted according to the forms of the Established Church. At the suggestion of Mrs. Paul, the wife of the Dean of Cashel, and an intimate friend and correspondent of the Countess, the Merchant Tailors' Hall was obtained, and opened for the worship of God. Several students, among whom was Messrs. Mead and Hawkesworth, were sent over at the sole expense of her Ladyship, and preached to the people with much success. They were, however, recalled in 1772 to attend the meeting convened at Trevecca to select missionaries for America; after which Mr. Hawkesworth was appointed to Dublin. Several of the members of the congregation had intimated a desire to be organized as an Independent Church; and meetings were held, and resolutions, expressing their desires, passed, which were forwarded to Lady Huntingdon. She shortly after returned an answer, which while it displays her catholicity, shows her steady determination to break the narrow boundaries of sect, and her attachment to her own liberal mode of worship. She wrote to Mr. Hawkesworth;—

"You know so well my sentiments of Independent congregations, that I need not enlarge; but I have heard it is determined by the people that they mean to collect themselves into a body for this purpose, and support a minister by subscription. You know my liberal way of thinking, by having all follow the light the Lord vouchsafes them; and, therefore, I must leave it under this situation. I can be no longer able to serve them, as according to what I do know, or have known, my call is a general and *universal* one; and I believe *this to be that of the College;* and my protection, *as a Dissenting Church,* is quite out of the order of all my work; and, if this become their settled choice, I think you will like to come to England—the sooner the better, after you see they have made their appointment of a minister. As I am satisfied you will not sacrifice the whole of your ministry to a handful of people, while the calls for you here are so many and so great; and nothing could distress me more than for you to sink into the formality of a single congregation, while your ministry is so generally owned of the Lord; therefore, dear Hawkesworth, hasten to us and help us. Eight drawn to America makes us much distressed for help. Be so good as to order the furniture, which Mead brought, to be sold, and the lodging given up, as soon as possible; as, under these circumstances, I consider myself wholly at liberty to withdraw."

The plan of erecting a new chapel in Dublin was abandoned, on account of the exorbitant price of land; and, by the advice of Mr. Shirley, the old Presbyterian meeting house in Plunket-Street was procured for the preaching of the gospel. For many years the congregation had been dwindling away under a cold and lifeless ministry, and but few cared to visit the gloomy and almost deserted building. Some unsuccessful attempts had been made to revive the expiring interest; and at length, the members separated and the chapel was rented by Lady Huntingdon. After being closed, for a short time, for alterations and repairs, it was re-opened early in 1773, under the auspices of the Countess, when public worship was celebrated on her Ladyship's usual plan. Her ministers speedily succeeded in gathering a large congregation to hear the glad tidings of salvation. She selected the most popular preachers for the new sphere; Messrs. Shirley, Eccles, Dr. Peckwell, and many other clergymen and students from Trevecca acquired much popularity in the city, and, by their zealous efforts, raised a large and flourishing interest in the capital of Ireland. The storm of opposition, however, soon raged violently around them. The cry of "*Methodism*" was raised by their enemies; the clergy appealed to their dignitaries to interpose their authority; and Mr. Shirley was marked out as the object of episcopal vengeance. The opposition, however, only stimulated their efforts, and increased their success; and many of the high and noble were induced to attend the chapel.

The sharp controversy between the Calvinists and Arminians had produced disastrous results among Wesley's societies in Ireland. The circuits became disorganized; the pulpits were irregularly supplied; discipline was very lax; and the people were dissatisfied with the controversial preaching of the ministers, and with the doctrines which were prominently exhibited in their discourses. Many applications were made to Mr. Shirley to urge Lady Huntingdon to send over some of her ministers to preach the gospel in other parts of Ireland, as well as in Dublin. Her Ladyship rejoiced that the people were willing to hear the glad tidings of salvation; but was sadly perplexed to know how to spare any of her labourers. Her sphere had grown so extensive, and applications for preachers so numerous, that every minister and student was at present engaged in the service of Christ in England and Wales. She wrote to Messrs. Venn, Madan, and Talbot, and solicited them to supply her chapel at Dublin, while Hawkesworth itinerated in the country; but various causes prevented them complying with her request. She at length prevailed on the Rev. Thomas Jones, who had often preached for her Ladyship, to undertake the work in Ireland. Soon after his arrival, Mr. Hawkesworth commenced his itinerancy, and visited, among other places, Limerick and Waterford. At the latter place he met with much success, and hired a large room which was regularly crowded with attentive hearers. He continued here for some time, and was succeeded by Mr. Jones, and other ministers in her Ladyship's Connexion. These faithful labourers carried the gospel into many towns and villages, experienced the hostility of the Popish priests, and frequently met with singular adventures. They were very successful in their work, and were the means of gathering congregations at Cork and Sligo, which were for some time connected with Lady Huntingdon.

Meanwhile the congregation in Dublin steadily increased; and the people were anxious to enjoy the regular ordinances of religion. Mr. Hawkesworth remained in Ireland during the winter of 1773, and was assisted by Mr. Jones, who, her Ladyship says, "begs much not to be confined to one congregation. While, therefore, he spreads the gospel elsewhere, let the people unite in prayer-meeting. Preaching they may hear long, and yet be miserably ignorant; whereas prayer-meetings must bring them on in the examination of the heart." Hawkesworth wrote to the Countess, and requested that he might be ordained; and she sent him a long letter dated October 13th, 1773, which presents some interesting details of her efforts in the cause of Christ.

"My dear Hawkesworth,—Last night, and not before, I received your letter, dated October 2nd, which was exceedingly sweet to me. Such a spirit of simplicity and godly sincerity breathed through the whole, that revived my heart abundantly, and caused me to bless our adorable Immanuel, that he had given me such a companion in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus, to labour with us in the mighty work appointed for us upon earth by him. O! it is great indeed, and is extending far and wide; and from the number of young men I have received into the College, devoted souls! it looks as if the Lord seemed resolved to cover the earth with the knowledge of his truth by their means. I shall write to-night to the College, and lay before them the call for Ireland, and your removal from thence; and I hope for two, and also for Mr. Peckwell, to be with that work this winter. This last I am not sure of; but two students will certainly be sent to change in the country, and one of them to be residing in Dublin, that the work there may be well carried on. Indeed, dear Hawkesworth, my heart is much with you, and ever since I have known you, you have been as a dearly beloved son to me in the Gospel. Your faithfulness, and great disinterestedness in the Lord's labours have so much united my heart to you, that it has been matter of self-denial I have so long parted from you. But till I found your heart first free to remove, I feared I might call you before the Lord's time from a people you were so owned of God and blessed to. I have often wanted you for plans where the greatest trust must be reposed; and, therefore, I am most abundantly thankful the Lord has given you the liberty I have been waiting for.

"As to your ordination, it shall be just as you find your own heart disposed. * * *

"The present state of work is as follows:—Two new students are in the west; Mr. Glascott occasionally there. Nuben and Aldridge in the Wiltshire work, the latter just removed to Dover. White is in London serving a very large congregation I have been called to supply with the College services. Smith I have taken into connexion, and who is much alive; he and another student supply Woolwich, Dartford, and another place we are called to serve. Kent promises great things. Sussex is supplied by Mr. Peckwell, and two students you don't know, with other local helps. Ellis, Harris, and Crole, a new student, are serving a new work which promises to spread in the city of Lincoln and other parts of Lincolnshire. *Poor, dear, and precious souls are walking miles to London, hearing I am there, to beg our help in different parts where the Gospel has never yet been preached.* Wales is blossoming, like a rose, in all the English parts, as well as great blessings on our Welsh labours. The chapel at Worcester, which is an exceedingly handsome one, is to be opened by Mr. Shirley, the 31st of this month. The long *round* in the various counties spreads in a most amazing manner. I keep to my old rule of going nowhere but from the call of the people first. The Lord knows only well how to employ us.

"I have as clearly and exactly informed you of the state of the work as possible; the College has much of the power of God, and overflows at present with numbers. *Twenty-four* are there at present, and lively honest souls, with the greatest harmony and love that ever subsisted in such a place; and this, I trust, owing to their all having but one thing in view. * * * *

"I am treating about ground to build a very large chapel at Wapping, in London. Mr. Peckwell was in Sussex when the account came of my great temporal loss in America; and out of great love, came to speak a word of comfort, but that was not the Lord's meaning, though it was his; and instead of three or four days for this purpose, he has been here nine weeks; and I suppose by the multitudes he preached to in the fields, Tower Hill, the churches, &c., that *a hundred thousand people at least have heard the gospel that never heard a word before.* He is amazingly popular, and much owned in the conversion and comforting of the people. I was rejoiced that the house had been burnt down, as this was the cause, the sole cause, of bringing him or me to London, where the fields are now every where white to the harvest.

"*Poor wicked Ireland, I trust, shall yet have a Gospel day. I can't yet see how or when, but it must be*; *and till I find that opportunity, my eye is only waiting darkly for its accomplishment.*

"Could I have thought my letters would have been of any comfort, I should have written; though, having the whole transaction of this work *on my own hands,* I am prevented from following my heart in many things; and I think my poor self such a hewer of wood and drawer of water, that I despair of being the least use or comfort to any. But my soul is in the dust, prostrate at the cross, hoping for all there; and after my poor little vile labours of the day, I go to rest, having finished the day's work as well as I can, and waiting for that voice each night that shall say—'Come up higher!' Thus I feel as void of care as a little child, knowing my dear Master cannot want me, and that his eye will be for a better, a more faithful and living servant in my place, when my work is done."

Towards the close of 1773, Lady Huntingdon was called to Bath by the serious illness of Lady Fanny Shirley, who was suffering the most excruciating pain through the ravages of disease. Mr. Shirley was then at Bath; and though severely tried by the loss of one of his children, he preached at the chapel, and consoled his relative. Early in the next year he was assisted in his labours by Mr. Venn. Lady Fanny enjoyed the visits of these excellent clergymen, and was enabled to bear her sufferings with patience and resignation. She felt that Christ was present with her, to sustain her faith, and cheer her heart. On one occasion, the physician who attended her observed to Mr. Venn, that he was quite at a loss to explain how she could bear her severe sufferings with so much tranquility. "Sir," he replied, "that lady possesses what you and I ought daily to pray for,—the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost." The Countess was usefully and actively engaged at Bath till March, 1774, when she repaired to London to be present at the opening of a large chapel, which she had taken under her patronage.

The metropolis had early witnessed the zeal and devotedness of Lady Huntingdon. Her residence in Park Street, and at Chelsea, had been thronged with the nobility in her drawing-rooms, and the poor in her kitchens; and she had persuaded Lady G. Gotham, Lady Fanny Shirley, and others to throw open their spacious mansions for the preaching of the gospel. In the beginning of 1770, her Ladyship took the lease of a chapel in

Ewart-Street, which had for many years belonged to the Society of Friends; and supplied it for some time with students from Trevecca. In a few years, however, the Rev. William Crawford was invited to the pastorage; the congregation professed Baptist sentiments; and Lady Huntingdon, acting on her plan of *unsectarian usefulness*, relinquished the chapel, and directed her labours elsewhere.

In the year 1773, the large and commodious chapel in Princess-Street, Westminster, became vacant by the removal of the congregation under Dr. Kippis to a smaller building. It was rented, repaired, and beautified by the munificence of Lady Huntingdon and a few friends, who were anxious for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom in the neighbourhood. In a letter written to Mr. Hawkesworth, replying to his urgent request for help, and to be ordained the resident minister of the church in Dublin, dated April 2nd, 1774, her Ladyship says:—

"Nothing can express the difficulty I feel for helpers, from the amazing increase of the work everywhere. Ireland must feel this with me, as well as England, Wales, and America. I am going to the College, with the Lord's leave, and from thence shall send you the best help I can. Dear Mr. Peckwell is ready in heart, but a large chapel of mine, holding more than three thousand, is to be opened this next week; and this being in the heart of Westminster, requires our most eminent ministers to follow up that preparation of heart the Lord has wrought;—and another I am going to erect at Wapping. The Lord has sent us Mr. Haweis to join our Connexion; and indeed he is a most blessed, and extraordinary minister."

This chapel was opened by Dr. Peckwell in April 1774, and was for several years supplied by ministers of the Established Church; among whom were Toplady, Shirley, Glascott, Pentycross, Jesse, and Dr. Haweis.

At length Dr. Peckwell became the stated minister, and changed the name of the building to that of "Westminster chapel."

The Countess was at this time treating for ground upon which to build a very large chapel at Wapping, whither her attention had been directed by the Rev. L. Coughlan, a clergyman who had lately returned from Newfoundland, and was then labouring in her Connexion. She could obtain the lease only for twenty-one years; and during the erection of the building, Dr. Peckwell, the Rev. C. S. Eccles, an Irish clergyman from Georgia, Mr. Coughlan, John Clayton, and several of her students, preached with great success under the Mulberry Trees, in the immediate neighbourhood. The chapel, however, was not opened till the close of the year 1776, in consequence of some unpleasant differences which arose respecting the choice of a minister. Mr. Toplady was consulted by her Ladyship as to the best mode of terminating the unpleasant affair; and several letters passed between him, Lady Huntingdon, and the managers, relative to the chapel. At length the affairs were amicably arranged; and the building rapidly progressed. The chapel was fitted up in an elegant manner, and was opened with every prospect of success. The order of service was according to the forms of the Church of England, and the pulpit was supplied by a periodical change of ministers. When, however, the lease expired in 1798, the building passed into the hands of the Independents belonging to Nightingale-Lane chapel. The freeehold of that chapel, as well as the freehold of Mulberry Garden, belonged to Messrs. Allen, the extensive brewers; and as they required the ground on which the Independent chapel stood, to enlarge their brewery, they proposed to the congregation an exchange of buildings, and offered to fit up, at their own expense, the Mulberry Garden chapel for their accommodation. The proposal was accepted; the renewal of the lease of her Ladyship's chapel was refused; and the congregation was, therefore, scattered. Part united with her Ladyship's connexion at Spafields and Sion chapels; and the remaining portion removed to Charlotte-Street, until it was taken down for the erection of the Docks; when they erected a place of worship in Pell-Street, Wellclose Square, which was called the New Mulberry Garden Chapel. It was opened September 29th, 1802, on the plan of the Connexion, with the Liturgy of the Church of England; and for two years was supplied by a rotation of ministers; after which the Rev. Isaac Nicholson, President of her Ladyship's College, was chosen the pastor, and preached there with much success till his death.

After staying a short time in London, Lady Huntingdon journeyed to Trevecca, and regulated the preaching plans of the students. She sent two over to Ireland to relieve Mr. Hawkesworth, who returned to England to be ordained. He remained a little time at Plymouth to aid those students who were supplying the Tabernacles of Plymouth and Dock; and, while here, received a letter from the Countess informing him that she was fully satisfied that it was right for him to be ordained, and requesting him to be present at the anniversary of the College. The services this year were rendered very interesting by the number of the ministers present, and the great interest which was excited among the people. As usual, for some days previous to the anniversary there was preaching in the chapel; and on the 24th of August, the crowd of persons in the grounds of the College was very great. There was preaching early in the morning; after which three hundred breakfasted together; then Welsh addresses were given to the people, who heartily responded to the fervid eloquence of Messrs. Williams and Rolands. Dr. Peckwell preached a powerful discourse from Rev. v. 9; the people publicly dined at her Ladyship's expense; and, after a short respite, Mr. Copeland and Mr. Williams preached. The evening was spent by the ministers and leading friends with her Ladyship, in solemn prayer and praise; and on the next day, the sacrament was administered, first to Lady Huntingdon and her ministers, and then to *thirty* of her students. A charge was given to the collegians by Dr. Peckwell; and to the end of the week, some of the ministers or students preached twice daily. The greatest joy pervaded all parties; the ministers and students were led to consecrate themselves more unreservedly to the service of their Saviour; and the people departed with the glad tidings of salvation, and with the grace of God in their hearts.

Lady Huntingdon left Trevecca for Bath, and was busily engaged in making arrangements for the ordination of Mr. Hawkesworth, which she wished to take place at Plymouth, and to be performed by Mr. Kinsman. From the accounts she had received from Mrs. Paul, she was gratified to learn that her work in Ireland was progressing very favourably; she, therefore, wrote to Mr. Kinsman, and requested his assistance to set apart her student to the work of the Lord in Dublin. He returned a favourable answer; and towards the end of September 1774, Mr. Hawkesworth was ordained in the same manner as the Independent ministers usually are, at the Tabernacle in Plymouth, as the officiating minister of Lady Huntingdon's chapel in Dublin. His call from the people and his credentials were examined; and his statement of doctrine being deemed satisfactory, he was solemnly set apart to the pastoral office by prayer, and the laying on of hands. The Countess was not able to be present, owing to the great amount of business that was pressing upon her. Her congregations, generally, were in a flourishing state; and the calls from various localities for the preaching of the gospel, were far more numerous than she could attend to.

Her chapel at Brighton had this year been taken down and rebuilt, chiefly at the expense of Miss Orton; and to expedite the erection, many pious mechanics connected with the congregation gratuitously gave their services at overtime. It was re-opened on the 24th of July by the veteran preacher, Mr. Romaine, who was now her Ladyship's oldest chaplain, and her most confidential adviser. She continued to visit this rising fashionable town till her death; and beheld with much satisfaction the results of her efforts. The congregation greatly increased under the ministry of such men as Toplady, Bliss, Dr. Haweis, Glascott, and Taylor; and the chapel was several times enlarged. In 1788 a front gallery was erected by the voluntary subscriptions of the friends; and in the year 1810, a further alteration was effected by opening into the chapel a large parlour for the accommodation of visitors, by building a fourth gallery for the poor, and school children, and by erecting a minister's vestry behind the pulpit. In 1822, the chapel was again enlarged by inclosing a piece of ground at the south end; and, was re-opened by Roland Hill, April 19th, 1822. The chapel now will contain about fifteen hundred persons, is exceedingly neat and elegant, and is crowded with attentive congregations to hear the Rev. J. Sortain, who for many years has maintained his great popularity in Brighton.

The attention of the Countess had been drawn to the spiritual destitution of Chichester in Sussex. A pious individual, hearing of the zeal, and successful efforts of her Ladyship, had written to her, and offered the use of his house for the preaching of the gospel, that she might be instrumental in dispersing the spiritual darkness which hung over the city and the neighbourhood. Lady Huntingdon never turned a deaf ear to any call, when she could assist; she accordingly repaired thither, accompanied by some of her devoted ministers; and meeting with much encouragement, she sent her students regularly to labour in this place. It was deemed desirable to possess a chapel in the city; and after a short time, a neat and comfortable building was erected. Lady Huntingdon was now accompanied by the Rev. T. Pentycross, who opened this chapel October 22nd, 1774. The services were well attended; and the preaching of Mr. English, who had been removed from Worcester to Chichester attracted many to the chapel, and was made useful in the conversion of sinners. He afterwards left to take charge of a congregation at Gosport; and Chichester was supplied by a rotation of students from Trevecca. The influence of the Countess was not confined to the city, but was widely felt in the surrounding districts; and shortly after, chapels were erected at Emsworth, Petworth, Guildford, and Basingstoke in Hants.

Mr. Pentycross had been noticed by the Countess from the commencement of his career. Through the interest of Romaine, for whom he occasionally officiated, he was presented to the living of St. Mary, Wallingford. Its value was exceedingly small, not much more than twelve pounds per annum; yet her Ladyship urged him to accept it, and generously sent him twenty-five pounds to commence a subscription to increase his remuneration, and promised her continued support, and prayers for the success of his ministry. His fame as a preacher speedily filled his church with attentive hearers; numbers came a considerable distance from the surrounding villages; and the word of truth entered the hearts of the people, and brought many to Jesus Christ. He officiated at her Ladyship's chapels, whenever she requested his services; at Bath he was very popular and successful; and at other places his appearance in the pulpit was always welcomed by the congregation. At a later period of his ministry in Wallingford, he becamed embroiled in doctrinal disputes with his parishioners, by his frequent speculations, which led to a separation from his church. Her Ladyship became greatly interested in the affair; and perceiving that additional accommodation for public worship was needed, she encouraged the separatists, and supplied them with preachers from College. During the first twelve months they assembled at a private house; after which they purchased another private house, and converted it into a chapel, which was opened for public worship by her Ladyship's chaplain, the Rev. Thomas Wills. This chapel, with the freehold estate on which it stood, was purchased by the society, and vested in nine trustees, and was for some time supplied by her Ladyship's ministers. Mr Pentycross gradually became reconciled to the separation; he considered it a wise provision in case the light of the gospel should be extinguished in the church, preached the truth with more earnestness and simplicity, and continued to enjoy the friendship and support of Lady Huntingdon.

CHAPTER XXII. A.D. 1774—1776.

INCREASE OF THE COUNTESS' LABOURS.—HER CHAPEL AT KIDDERMINSTER.—STATE OF RELIGION AT READING.—DR. TALBOT.—PERSECUTION.—HER CHAPELS AT READING AND BRISTOL.—LADY HUNTINGDON VISITS CORNWALL.—ST. IVES.—MEVAGISSEY.—ST. COLUMB.—WEST LOOE.—TRURO.—LADY HUNTINGDON AT NORWICH.—PURCHASES THE TABERNACLE.—HER GREAT SUCCESS THERE.—ANNIVERSARY OF HER COLLEGE.—REMARKABLE SCENES.

SHORTLY after the opening of the chapel at Chichester, Lady Huntingdon was called to London on important business connected with the chapels, especially the Mulberry Garden. She wrote to Mr. Hawkesworth, "The hurry I have been in since I came from Sussex must excuse me to you. Opening a chapel at Chichester for the Lord, with the business that arises from the amazing increase of our work, allows little time to indulge myself, even in that of the more constant intercourse with my friends." Her Ladyship congratulated him on his ordination, urged him to pray for her in the midst of many difficulties, and requested him to make his first journey to London, "as business must protract my stay, and much must be settled for Ireland." Mr. Hawkesworth shortly came to the metropolis: preached at Mr. Piercy's chapel at Woolwich, which was under her Ladyship's patronage while he was in America; arranged his plans with the Countess for Ireland; and departed to Dublin to take the sole charge of the work in that country. This was the busiest period of her Ladyship's life. The entire machinery of her efforts was under her sole superintendence; the voluminous correspondence passed through her own hands, and was answered by herself; and the calls from dark localities were investigated by her, sometimes even by a personal inspection of the place. Every year her chapels were becoming more numerous, and her exertions more extended; and though she was often perplexed by the smallness of her income, her faith carried her triumphantly through her difficulties.

Towards the end of 1774, the Rev. B. Fawcett, and other pious persons invited Lady Huntingdon to send some of her students to Kidderminster, a town which was honoured with the residence and ministry of the celebrated Richard Baxter. Their ministry was attended with considerable success; the town was once or twice visited by the Countess, and her most popular ministers; and many years after, a chapel was erected here, which still continues in her Ladyship's Connexion. Worcestershire enjoyed much of the services of her ministers; many dark places were enlightened by their labours; little chapels and preaching stations were erected in those parts where the people were impressed with the truth; and many large and flourishing congregations owe their origin to the zeal and piety of the students.

Lady Huntingdon spent the early part of 1775 at Bath, where she appears to have been greatly afflicted with sickness, which prevented her doing as much in the service of her Master as she desired. She was at this time deeply interested in the welfare of the people at Reading. The Rev. Dr. Talbot, vicar of St. Giles, had been for many years her intimate friend and coadjutor. When vicar of Kineton, Warwickshire, he had frequently itinerated for her Ladyship, in company with Mr. Madan, and preached the gospel in her chapels at Bath, Brighton, and other places. On his removal to Reading, his evangelical doctrines and amiable character secured him the respect and love of his parishioners; and his labours, together with those of his excellent curate, Mr. Hallward, a man possessing similar spirit and views to his own, were very beneficial to his hearers. When, however, he was on a visit to his intimate friend, Lord Dartmouth, he was seized with a fever, which he had contracted in the discharge of his duties. His congregation was about to assemble on a certain day to implore the divine blessing to rest upon him, when the news reached his sorrowing wife that he had departed this world, March 2nd, 1774. The intelligence threw his congregation into the greatest consternation. They were deeply attached to him, but more so to the doctrines of the gospel; and they feared that his successor would be a man of very different sentiments. The living was unexpectedly conferred on the Rev. William B. Cadogan, a young gentleman of noble family, who was not yet ordained, and who was incapable of officiating for nearly twelve months. The churchwardens, therefore, retained Mr. Hallward till the vicar arrived; and as that time approached, the congregation drew up a petition, and presented it to the new vicar, praying that Mr. Hallward might be retained in his curacy. They expected that Mr. Cadogan, succeeding such a man as Dr. Talbot, would be only too glad to secure the services of a respected and useful curate; but he threw the petition into the fire, and imperatively declared that Mr. Hallward should never again preach in his pulpit.

During the interval between the death of Dr. Talbot and the induction of Mr. Cadogan, Lady Huntingdon paid Reading a visit to console her afflicted friend, Mrs. Talbot. The greatest concern was manifested for the interests of evangelical religion in the town; and much conversation ensued between the two excellent ladies and

Mr. Hallward, as to the best means of providing for the spiritual wants of the congregation, should he be dismissed from the curacy. When the petition was rejected, Mr. Hallward immediately applied to her Ladyship for assistance; and the venerable Countess wrote to him a long letter, dated Bath, April 27th, 1775, in which she says:—

"I was much obliged by your kind letter, and you may depend on my yielding every service in my power to the Lord's people at Reading, who are so near your heart. Our conversation, you may remember, led, without design, to those means that did appear immediately calculated for the most extensive usefulness in the various services of the gospel; and, in consequence, brought out *verbally* what my practice for so many years had proved so positively. I am persuaded that the wisdom from above is as free from partiality as it is from hypocrisy; and for this reason, our fears relative to either ought to be as such indulged as in any other apparent contradiction to the word of God, in the most solid experiences of an humble mind. The present Reformation has been owned by the Lord under the general idea of irregularity; but I humbly think his orders are more regularly observed by this conduct than by any other means. You must allow me, dear Sir, the freedom this great subject obliges me to. The express word of God orders and directs his servants, as messengers of peace to the whole world; and they are either under the necessity of obeying, or they are not. If he has not the authority of even an earthly master to engage the obedience, place, and time of his servants, his precepts must be vain, and, of course, every degree of their obedience vain also; but we, as wretched bond-slaves, redeemed by a love stronger than death to liberty and life, seem to have no conditions to make in the service of such a friend; and any composition for body, soul, or spirit, must imply an insensibility of the purchased blessing, or the debt from us ever due to such a heavenly purchaser. This, to each individual, seems the state of our case. What shall we say, then, when still further favoured, as ministers, not only to know this for their *own* everlasting comfort, but are also honoured by a *commission to declare* such glad tidings of rich, free, covenanted mercy to every creature? Should thousands attempt to restrain such, by any supposed power found inferior to that which they have received, in order to make them hold their peace, we venture to circumscribe their commission."

As soon as Mr. Cadogan began to preach, the people naturally were very curious to hear what doctrines he intended to promulgate to the congregation. They patiently heard him a few times, and became fully assured of the character of his views. It was impossible for them, accustomed as they had been to the simple preaching of the gospel, to be satisfied with the moral essays and pharisaic sentiments which now were delivered from the pulpit. The congregation, therefore, left and became scattered. Some flocked to the dissenting chapel, where they could hear evangelical preaching; but others, not satisfied with their mode of worship, applied to the Countess of Huntingdon for her assistance, and took a large place, capable of containing several hundred persons, which was fitted up as a place of worship, and opened on the plan of her Ladyship's chapels, with the Liturgical service.

Mr. Cadogan was indignant at the course adopted by his congregation, and openly manifested his great displeasure at their proceedings. His bitterest feelings were directed to Mrs. Talbot; who remained in the town, and by her counsel and aid, greatly promoted the interests of true religion. Her house was the resort of all who were impressed with the truth; her rooms were thrown open for religious services, where her Ladyship's chaplains, and other ministers expounded the scriptures, and prayed; and her time was daily occupied in instructing and encouraging young converts to Christ. The vicar remonstrated with her in several letters; but her answers were so full of the meekness and sweetness of religion, that, at length, the persecuting spirit of the clergyman retired and his heart yielded to the general influence of real Christian character. The chapel was supplied by some of the most popular ministers in her Ladyship's Connexion; Dr. Peckwell, Dr. Haweis, Messrs. Wills, Taylor, Glascott, and other clergymen preached there with much success; and several of the students were made exceedingly useful in the conversion of sinners.

While these affairs were transpiring at Reading, Lady Huntingdon was actively engaged in establishing a chapel at Bristol. The success which had attended the erection of the Tabernacle in this large and populous city, induced her Ladyship to consider the propriety of procuring a place of worship at the other end of the city. After carefully considering the matter, her attention was directed to a large building which had been used as an assembly room, and occasionally as a theatre. The proprietor agreed to let it on a lease, for £40 per annum; and she immediately signed the agreement, and expended nearly £800 in rendering it suitable for divine worship. It was opened in the month of August 1775, by Dr. Peckwell and Mr. Glascott, and was well attended by ministers and people. The Countess had been for some time in a precarious state of health; and though she anticipated with pleasure her departure for the better land, her ministers and congregations looked with great alarm at the probability of such an event at present. Her mind, however, was active and enterprising; her soul was burning with love; and her entire energy was concentrated on the accomplishment of her great designs, while her life was still spared. Her chapel in Bristol proved a great blessing to the city; for ten years the pulpit was supplied by clergymen of the Church of England; it became the resort of the fashionable circles, visiting Clifton and the neighbourhood; and its large prayer-meetings were attended by pious persons from all parts of the city.

Several attempts were made, during the life of the Countess, to obtain a new chapel; but they were frustrated by unforeseen circumstances. In one instance, a large sum of money was contributed; but it was either returned to the subscribers, or applied to some other purpose with their consent. The congregation very much declined, after her Ladyship's death; but the visits of the Rev. William Cooper, from Dublin, revived the drooping cause, imparted fresh vigour to the people, and filled the chapel with awakened hearers. The place became far too small to accommodate the applicants; and he frequently preached from a window to a much larger crowd outside, than that within the building. In 1820 a fresh attempt was made to erect a chapel, and about £800 was expended on a site; which, being afterwards deemed ineligible, was sold, and the money invested in the hands of the trustees of the Connexion. The Rev. W. Lucy became the resident minister in 1823, and commenced an effort to procure a new building. The present site in Lodge-Street was purchased; a fine gothic stone edifice was erected, with a handsome recess for the pulpit and reading desks, and with capacious galleries around three sides of the chapel. The school-rooms occupy one half of the other space under the chapel; and the entire cost of erection was upwards of £4,500, towards which the Connexion Trustees gave a considerable sum, on condition of the whole building being vested in their trust. The chapel will accommodate about twelve hundred persons, and was opened in August, 1831, by the Rev. John Brown, and the Rev. James Sherman. The Rev. J.

Eastmead has lately been appointed to this important sphere.

A few weeks after the opening of the chapel at Bristol, Lady Huntingdon accepted the invitation of her niece, Mrs. Wills, to visit Cornwall. Mr. Wills still held his curacy of St. Agnes, near Truro, and had greatly interested her Ladyship by his accounts of the poor miners. Cornwall was almost a barbarous land; the light of divine truth was confined to a few spots, where the celebrated Samuel Walker had laboured; and the miners lived in a state of the deepest ignorance and vice. Soon after her arrival, she wrote to Mr. Hawkesworth, at Dublin, and invited him to join her in her efforts; and says, "My call here is to the tinners, and thousands and tens of thousands of poor perishing creatures, whom all seem to neglect; their souls are the objects of my loving care; and if the Lord permit, I wish to make three or four establishments in the heart of the tin mines, for their instruction and salvation." During her stay in Cornwall, Lady Huntingdon visited several places in the county with Mr. Wills, and other ministers; and was so delighted with the attention of the people to the preaching of the gospel, that she directed several of her ministers and students to cultivate this portion of England. Her efforts were successful; and in a few years there were no less than twenty congregations in her Connexion, which had their origin in the labours of her students, and were regularly supplied from Trevecca.

The Countess paid a visit to St. Ives; and deeming it a proper sphere of usefulness, requested some of her students to preach in the town. A large room was procured, but the people were not much disposed to enter it; and for some years, little good was effected. At length one of the students, Robert M'All, was induced to settle in the town, and in 1804 opened the present neat and commodious chapel. He laboured here till 1813, when he removed to London; and the congregation declined. The trustees of the Connexion came to their help, discharged their debt, and appointed a fresh minister. The chapel will seat about five hundred persons, and is now ably supplied by the respected minister, the Rev. E. S. Hart.

The chapel at Mevagissey owes its origin to this visit of her Ladyship to Cornwall. Her ministers preached here several times, and in 1777, a neat chapel was erected, towards which the Countess gave one hundred pounds. The people were desirous of placing it entirely under her control; but she requested them to appoint trustees, that her ministers might labour there whenever they had an opportunity. At St. Columb, a chapel was erected, and supplied by her Ladyship's students, whose preaching proved beneficial to many. When Mr. Wills resigned his curacy at St. Agnes, and was appointed Lady Huntingdon's chaplain, in 1779, he sold part of his plate, and built a small chapel in the village, which was also supplied by the students. They preached also at West Looe, where Sir Harry Trelawney had strangely acted as a preacher; and by their zeal raised a small place of worship, and gathered an attentive congregation.

Truro had long been highly favoured with the ministry of the renowned Samuel Walker, a man who was exceedingly useful in his county, and was the means of bringing out several devoted ministers. He had formed the serious portion of his congregation into two classes; which met once a week alternately for reading a sermon and prayer, and for religious conversation and prayer. After his death, the people kept up the practice: and thus supplied, in some measure, what was wanting in the ministrations of his successor. Some of them, however, erected a place of worship, and enrolled themselves as protestant dissenters; but the others, though unable to obtain spiritual instruction in the church, could not be prevailed upon to join them. They held their meetings in their room on the Lord's day, as well as on the week-day, when their dissenting brethren met with them; and obtained the occasional services of Dr. Haweis and Mr. Wills, who were well known in Truro. Soon after his ordination, Mr. Wills preached in the market-place of Truro. It happened on that day, that a play was to be performed at the theatre, for the benefit of one of the actors. Curiosity led many persons to hear their townsman, Mr. Wills; the theatre was nearly deserted; and many among the crowd were savingly impressed with the truth. Some years after, this theatre was shut up; and Mr. Wills went to examine its eligibility as a chapel for Lady Huntingdon. On entering, he passed two persons, one of whom paid his respects to him in a very marked manner, which Mr. Wills returned. After the clergyman had passed, the companion of this person said to him, "Pray, do you know that gentleman?" He replied, "Know him! yes, I have reason to know him, he preached a sermon in the market-place, some time back, on my benefit night; the house was nearly empty, and the people flocked to him!" This theatre was eventually purchased by the Countess, and fitted up as a chapel, whither the remains of Walker's congregation removed. It was for many years supplied by the students, like the other chapels in the Connexion.

In the spring of 1776, Lady Huntingdon visited Norwich, in company with Lady Anne Erskine, and Mr. Toplady. The congregation of the Tabernacle in this city had been gradually dwindling away, during the time John Wesley held possession of the place. At the expiration of his lease, Mr. Wheatley let it to the Rev. John Hook, who held it till February 1775, when the Countess agreed to take it on a lease at £40 per annum. She immediately sent down her most popular clergymen; among whom were Messrs. Shirley, Glascott, and Bowman, whose preaching was attractive, and revived the congregation. Her stay now was not of long duration; but the results of her visit were very satisfactory. Mr. Toplady, who had officiated at her chapels in Bath and Brighton, produced a deep impression upon the people at Norwich. He was a man of considerable talents and attainments; though his frame was slender and delicate, his mind was clear and powerful, and his voice melodious and distinct; and his extemporaneous discourses were full of lively sentiments and pathos, and rendered peculiarly impressive by his action and appeals. His health obliged him to give up his residence in Devon; he, therefore, preached at most of her Ladyship's chapels, and to a stated congregation in Orange-Street, London. During his visit to Norwich, the congregation was regularly organized and the affairs of the society arranged. In a letter to Mr. Hawkesworth, Lady Huntingdon says:—"I have one congregation at Norwich, *four thousand* hearers, *six hundred* communicants; and this under two students, who write me word that about *thirty* were added to that society in three weeks."

In the following August, the Countess purchased Mr. Wheatley's share in the Tabernacle for £900, and vested the chapel in seven trustees, four clerical and three lay; who were empowered to fill up any vacancy in the trust, to form a committee for the management of the secular affairs of the chapel, and to regulate the appointment of a minister. Her Ladyship first appointed the Rev. Mark Wilks, who had been educated at her College, and had itinerated chiefly in Wales and Warwickshire. He was an eccentric man, and when he made his appearance in Norwich, he attracted considerable attention. He was slender and ruddy, with long hair flowing over his shoulders; and took, for his first text, the striking passage, "There is a lad here which hath five barley loaves and two small fishes." His forcible and quaint expressions riveted his audience; the congregation rapidly increased; the truth impressed many hearts; and peace and prosperity reigned. In the course of a few years, Mr. Wilks left, and, to the deep regret of her Ladyship, withdrew from her Connexion; which caused several to leave the Tabernacle, and purchase a chapel which Mr. Bowman, who had been requested to withdraw, had built. They invited Mr. Wilks to settle among them; and he accepted the invitation, and shortly after formed the society into a Baptist church, which occasioned many of his warmest admirers to forsake him. A few years before his death, there was a *second* separation from the Tabernacle, when a new place of worship was erected in a different part of the city. The Tabernacle was supplied by a succession of clergymen and ministers, till the death of the Countess, when Mr. Philips, in 1792 was appointed the resident minister. He continued there till 1816, when a *third* separation took place, in consequence of the renewal of his appointment. The seceders erected a large chapel in Princess-Street, in March 1819, and chose the Rev. J. Alexander as their pastor. The Rev. John Owen was for some years the pastor of the Tabernacle, and on his removal to Bath was succeeded by the Rev. J. Dryden, during whose ministry there arose a very unpleasant struggle between the trustees, committee, and minister. For two years, the disputes ran high and vehement; and on May 8th, 1836, the *fourth* separation took place by the minister, and a large body of the congregation removing to the New Tabernacle. The orignal Tabernacle has, however, revived under the able ministry of the present pastor, the Rev. J. Kempster.

Lady Huntingdon spent a considerable portion of 1776 in Wales. Her College was essential to the accomplishment of her plans; and she breathed into her students the zealous spirit which glowed within her. She treated them with maternal kindness; and so thoroughly won their gratitude, that they were ready to do anything to please their noble patroness, and to promote her great designs. The anniversary of the College this year was attended by a larger number of ministers and people than on any former occasion; a convincing proof how highly the Institution was valued. Mr. Toplady was one of the preachers on the occasion; and in a letter to his friend, Mr. Hussey, he gives an account of a singular incident that occurred.

"The night I left town, the Worcester coach, in which I went, broke down; but not one of us received the least injury. I have a still greater deliverance to acquaint you with; even such as, I trust, will never be blotted from my thankful remembrance. On the anniversary day in Wales, the congregation was so large, that the chapel would not have contained a fourth part of the people, who were supposed to amount to *three thousand.* No fewer than *one thousand three hundred horses* were turned into one large field adjoining the College, besides what were stationed in the neighbouring villages. The carriages also were unusually numerous. A scaffold was erected at one end of the College-Court, on which a book-stand was placed, by way of pulpit, and thence six or seven of us preached, successively, to one of the most attentive and lively congregations I ever beheld. When it came to my turn to preach, I advanced to the front, and had not gone more than half way through my prayer before sermon, when the scaffold suddenly fell in. As I stood very near the higher-most step, and the steps did not fall with the rest, Providence enabled me to keep on my feet, through the assistance of Mr. Winkworth, who laid fast hold of my arm. About *forty* ministers were on the scaffold and steps when the former broke down. Dear Mr. Shirley fell undermost of all, but received no other hurt than a very slight bruise on one of his thighs. A good woman, who, for the conveniency of hearing, had placed herself under the scaffold, received a trifling contusion on her face. No other mischief was done. The congregation, though greatly alarmed, had the prudence not to throw themselves into outward disorder; which, I believe, was chiefly owing to the powerful sense of God's presence, which was eminently felt by most of the assembly.

"Such was the wonderful goodness of the Lord to me, that I was not in the least disconcerted on this dangerous occasion; which I mention to the praise of that grace and providence; without which, a much smaller incident would inevitably have shocked every nerve I have. About half a minute after the interruption had commenced, I had the satisfaction to inform the people that no damage had ensued; and removing for security to a lower step, I thanked the Lord, with the rejoicing multitude, for having so undeniably given his angels charge concerning us. Prayer ended, I was enabled to preach, and great grace seemed to be upon us all."

CHAPTER XXIII. A.D. 1776—1781.

THE POWER OF EXAMPLE.—CONDITION OF SPAFIELDS.—THE PANTHEON.—NORTHAMPTON CHAPEL.—RICHMOND.—OPENING OF SPAFIELDS CHAPEL.—PERSECUTION.—ECCLESIASTICAL COURTS.—RELIGIOUS POSITION OF LADY HUNTINGDON IN ENGLAND.—HER CHAPEL AT BATH.—DISPUTES WITH WHITEFIELD'S TRUSTEES.—CHELTENHAM.—HER CHAPEL THERE.—WELSH CONGREGATIONS.—ROWLAND HILL.

THE example of a godly life exerts a powerful influence, and secures the happiest results. The virtues which shine brightly amid the circumstances of life, encourage many to strive after what has been already attained; and the longer the life is protracted, the more powerful does the example become. The age of the venerable Countess did not retard her efforts to spread abroad the knowledge of Christ. The conviction that she could not spend many more years upon earth, stimulated her zeal; the thought of that eternity into which she must ere long enter, awakened in her susceptible heart a compassionate yearning for the salvation of souls; and the success which God had been pleased to grant to her past efforts, convinced her that, though her labours had been condemned by man, they had received the sanction of the Lord, and had been crowned with his blessing. She, therefore, was prepared to go forward in her illustrious career, to add to the arduous duties which already pressed heavily upon her, to listen to the appeals which were made for her assistance, and to open fresh places of worship in destitute places. Her means were so limited, that most persons would have trembled at the designs she contemplated; but her faith was so simple and strong, that, whenever she was convinced it was her duty to act, she boldly accomplished the deed, and left the results with God.

Towards the close of 1776, the attention of Lady Huntingdon was directed to the spiritual destitution of Clerkenwell. The present crowded neighbourhood of Spafields was at this period quite rural, and formed a dangerous locality for travellers to pass through after dark. The paths were very bad, especially in winter, and were infested with thieves; the haunts of vice, and the abodes of robbers were close by; and many a dark and deadly deed was perpetrated in the silence of night. Those who walked in the evening, from the city to the hamlet of Islington, were accustomed to wait at the end of Percival-Street, until a considerable party had collected, when they were escorted through Spafields by an armed patrole, appointed for the purpose; and it was customary for travellers approaching London, to remain all night at the Angel Inn, near Islington, rather than venture across this dangerous spot after dark. This locality was noted for the fashionable sport of duck-hunting, and contained a solitary tavern, called the Dog and Duck, which passed into the hands of Mr. Rosomond, who converted the grounds into extensive pleasure gardens. The whole of the property came into the possession of the Marquis of Northampton, who let a portion of these gardens to Mr. Craven, for the purpose of erecting a large circular building, in imitation of the celebrated Pantheon at Rome. This spacious edifice was opened in May, 1770, as a place of amusement, and speedily acquired notoriety as a public resort for all ranks and both sexes on the Lord's day. Though patronized by the

Prince of Wales, and many of the nobility, after the first year it was unsuccessful as a place of amusement; and, in three years, Mr. Craven became a bankrupt. The lease was then disposed of to the proprietor of Sadlers-Wells' Theatre, who dreaded a rival establishment; and after being used for a short time as a mart for the sale of carriages, the building became vacant. A curious incident connected with its erection deserves notice. Mrs. Craven could not be induced to visit the building until near its completion. She then inspected it with a friend, who asked her what she thought of it; when, full of apprehension for her husband and her family, she burst into tears, and exclaimed, "It is very pretty; but I forsee it will be the ruin of *us*, and, one day or other, will be turned into a Methodist meeting-house."

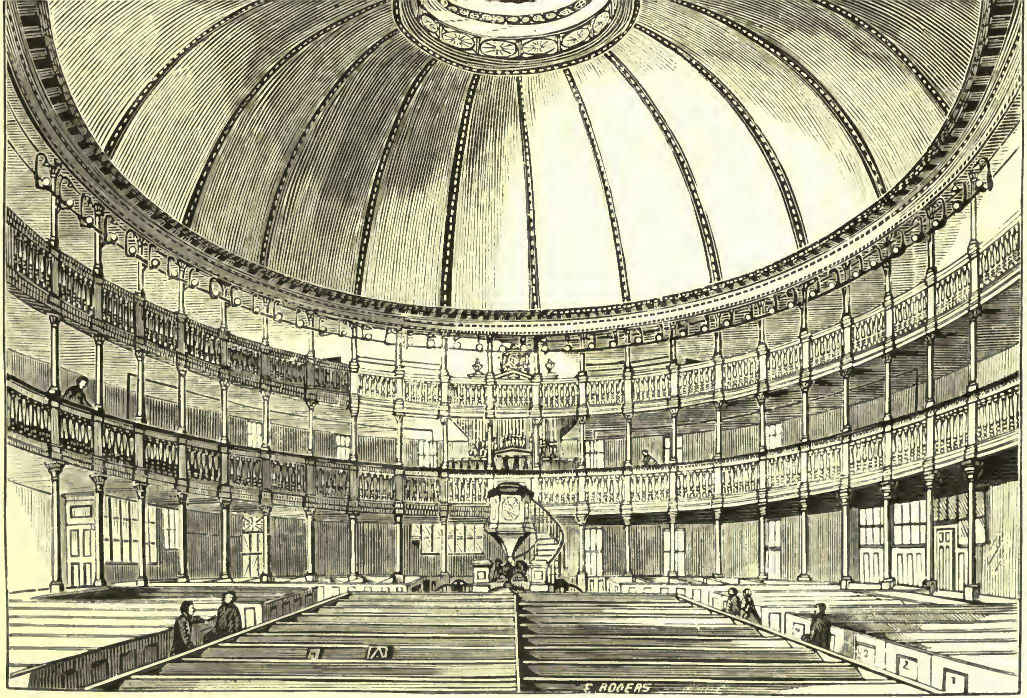
Lady Huntingdon greatly desired to obtain possession of this noble edifice, which had two tiers of galleries surrounding it, supported by numerous elegant columns, that she might convert it into a chapel, and bring the gospel into the benighted neighbourhood. She instructed Messrs. Shirley, Parker, and Crole to consult each other on the project, and to ascertain the terms on which the proprietor would be willing to dispose of the building. It appears that there were two parties already treating for it; and her friends so discouraged her by their advice, that she reluctantly declined to purchase the Pantheon. She says:—

"My heart seems strongly set upon having this temple of folly dedicated to Jehovah Jesus, the great head of his church and people. Dear Mr. Berridge does not discourage the undertaking, but says I may count upon a fit of sickness, if I engage in this affair. I feel so deeply for the perishing thousands in that part of London, that I am almost tempted to run every risk; and though, at this moment, I have not a penny to command, yet I am so firmly persuaded of the goodness of the Master, whose I am, and whom I desire to serve, that I shall not want gold or silver for the work. It is his cause; he has the hearts of all at his disposal; and I shall have help, when he sees fit to employ me in his service. Nevertheless, with some regret, I give up the matter at this time. You are on the spot, and your opinion, in circumstances of this nature, may be better than mine; but faith tells me to *go forward, nothing fearing, nothing doubting.*"

As soon as the determination of Lady Huntingdon was made known to the proprietors, the Pantheon was let to a committee of gentlemen, who converted it into a place of worship. A considerable expense was incurred in fitting it up; the figure of Fame, which surmounted the dome, was exchanged for a lantern cupola; and a pulpit and reading desks were erected. It was opened on Saturday, July 5th, 1777, by the Rev. John Ryland, and was called Northampton chapel, in honour of the nobleman on whose ground it stands. The Revs. Hubert Jones, and William Taylor, two episcopal clergymen, were engaged as preachers, whose ministrations speedily attracted a large congregation. They stood alone in the church, in this part of London, for proclaiming the evangelical doctrines of religion. Their preaching gave great offence to the Rev. W. Sellon, Incumbent of Clerkenwell, who was annoyed and jealous at their success, and resolved to remove them from their sphere of usefulness. He claimed the right of preaching in the chapel whenever he pleased, and of nominating the ministers who should officiate; and made other demands, which the ministers and committee resisted. An ecclesiastical law-suit was instituted; the Incumbent triumphed; the two clergymen were forbidden to preach there; the chapel was closed, and the large congregation scattered.

While these events were transpiring, Mr. Toplady drew the attention of the Countess to Richmond, then a place of fashionable resort, and of great gaiety. The theatre had been hired by Rowland Hill, Mr. Joss, and Mr. West, a popular clergyman, who frequently made excursions to Richmond, and preached there amid much opposition. The proprietor was anxious to dispose of the theatre to her Ladyship, and commissioned Mr. Hough to wait on Mr. Toplady with a view of negotiating the matter. The Countess, however, did not approve of the step; for, in a letter to Mr. Shirley, she says, "I have prayed for light, but the cloud does not move towards Richmond. The opposition which Mr. Hill and others have experienced, is very discouraging. Consult with dear Mr. Toplady, and look earnestly for directions from above. May your great Master guide you in this matter! My mind is against it, but I am content to submit to your better judgment; persuaded that, if it is his will who governs all things, we shall be sent to Richmond, with full authority to proclaim his grace, and make his name more known amongst that people.

When Lady Huntingdon heard of the result of the ecclesiastical proceedings instituted by Mr. Sellon, she immediately repaired to London, to obtain possession of the chapel, if possible. Mr. Toplady had finished his career on earth; she, therefore, consulted with Lord Dartmouth, Mr. Thornton, and others; concluded an agreement with the proprietors; and took the spacious chapel under her patronage. A few alterations and improvements were effected; the name of it was changed to Spafields chapel; and it was re-opened March 28th, 1779, by the Rev. Dr. Haweis, who preached a powerful and impressive sermon on that occasion. The Countess then supposed she had a right, as a peeress of the realm, to employ her own chaplains any time and place in the most public manner, without being exposed to the terrors of the ecclesiastical courts. She was, however, soon undeceived; for Mr. Sellon attacked every clergyman



SPA-FIELDS CHAPEL.

who preached in the place. The question of her right was mooted in the ecclesiastical court, where it was decided against her; and Dr. Haweis and Mr. Glascott, as ministers of the Establishment, were obliged to discontinue their services at Spafields. Lady Huntingdon was greatly harassed by the opposition she experienced. and sought the highest legal advice on the matter. She forwarded to Sergeant Glynn a list of queries as to what constitutes a peer's domestic chapel—whether it is exempt from ecclesiastical jurisdiction—whether a peer could admit whom he pleased to it—and whether he could shield his chaplains from the citations of courts. He returned answers to these queries; and, in his letter to her Ladyship, says:—

"Ecclesiastical law, such as it now stands, is against you in some points, which would not be insurmountable were our Bishops differently minded. * * * I anxiously look for reformation in some matters connected with the Established Church, to which I am conscientiously attached; and though I may not live to see any great change, yet, I am pursuaded, the time is not far distant, when *Bishops will deeply lament* the obstinate, headstrong tyranny which has driven so many from the church, and that persecuting spirit, so prominent in their character; in too many instances, more in accordance with the dark, intolerant spirit of the Romish church, than with the enlightened principles of the Protestant faith.

"Your Ladyship's benevolent conduct must command the respect and veneration of every liberal-minded man. I shall be most happy at all times in giving my humble aid to the furtherance of your most excellent designs for the good of mankind, and the improvement of the ignorant multitude. My professional services are ever at your Ladyship's command."

After Dr. Haweis and Mr. Glascott had been silenced, Mr. Wills supplied the pulpit for some time, when he suddenly left London, to avoid a citation before the court. The Rev. W. Taylor again came forward to officiate in Spafields, and was speedily put down by the intolerance of Mr. Sellon. These repeated persecutions induced Lady Huntingdon to devise a plan by which she might baffle her cruel and bitter enemy. She could not dispute the decisions of the court, and, while might conquers right, she says, "*I am reduced to turn the finest congregation, not only in England, but in any part of the world, into a dissenting meeting, unless by the medium of secession.* This is a subject, in considering which, nothing but the very clearest convictions of conscience, impressed by the Holy Ghost for the continued protection of the truth, and faithfulness to God's people, ought to make it a point worth any minister's attending to."

At length, to avoid further molestation, it became necessary to take shelter under the Toleration Act, and for the clergymen, who wished to officiate in her chapels, to take the oaths of allegiance as Dissenters. Mr. Wills and Mr. Taylor publicly seceded from the Church; and the former was appointed the resident minister of the chapel. Their secession from the Establishment occasioned a great stir among the religious community; many unjust reflections were cast upon her Ladyship and her ministers; and her efforts were stigmatised as introducing a new schism in the Church of Christ. This step, however, was *forced* upon her, by the tyranny of ecclesiastical rule; and was the only course open to her, unless she would abandon her work. The decision of the courts placed her in a different position from what she had hitherto occupied. She had, up to this time, obtained the services of clergymen of the Church of England for her chapels; but now they were placed in a most painful situation. As they could not legally preach beyond the boundaries of their parish, they must withdraw their services from the congregations, where they had often and successfully laboured, and be content to see the people perishing in dark localities, without attempting to save them; or, they must expose themselves to the penalties of the ecclesiastical courts. Lady Huntingdon was warmly attached to the Church of England, and loved its doctrines and admirable liturgy; but she could not relinquish her important labours, nor quench her love for perishing souls, for the purpose of preserving a certain ecclesiastical status. She accomplished a mighty work; she fostered religion in the Establishment, and gave an impetus to Christian activity and zeal; and the impartial historian will own the value of her efforts, and pronounce her a great, if not the greatest, character in the religious history of the eighteenth century. Several of the clergymen associated with her were induced, by the terrors of the courts, to relinquish preaching in her chapels; among whom were Romaine, Venn, Townsend, and Jesse, though they continued to be her friends, and those of her coadjutors. Other clergymen, such as Dr. Haweis, Wills, Taylor, Glascott, Bradford, Jones, Piercy, Pentycross, and Charles, continued their services; and were greatly blessed in saving souls. The Countess was thankful that, though man frowned upon her, the Lord still blessed her labours; and in one of her letters, she says:—

"I am to be cast out of the Church now only for what I have been doing these forty years—*speaking and living for Jesus Christ!* and if the days of my captivity are now to be accomplished, those that turn me out and so set me at liberty, may soon feel what it is, by sore distress themselves, for those hard services they have caused me. Blessed be the Lord, I have not one care relative to this event, but to be found exactly faithful to God and man through all. You will smile and rejoice with me in all I may suffer for our dear Immanuel's sake. I have asked none to go with me; and none, that do not come willingly to the help of the Lord, and by faith in the Son of God, lay all at his feet, would do me any good; and He only knows these. * * *

"Dear Mr. Haweis, Wills, &c., are mightily owned and blessed of God in the conversion of sinners. The chapel is crowded from door to door, and multitudes go away disappointed at not being able to get in. Mr. Sellon is in a mighty rage with Mr. Sergeant Glynn for what he terms 'his vile abuse of him.' I am greatly indebted to him, and other law officers of the Crown, for their able advice and assistance in this affair. I have been severely handled and vilified; but none of these things move me, determined the short remnant of my declining age shall be employed in setting up the standard, and enlarging the circle of evangelical light and truth. With the Lord's help, I shall go on in devotedness to his work, and wait contentedly for his approbation when called to give up my accounts."

Success crowned her efforts at Spafields; the place was thronged; and many were converted under the powerful preaching of Mr. Wills. He once took for his text, "The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised;" and while he was depicting the solemnities of the last judgment, the heavens suddenly grew black, and a terrible storm arose. The successive flashes of lightening darted upon the congregation through the cupola; the heavy bursts of thunder rolled around the chapel; the rain dashed in torrents against the windows; and the whole fearfully illustrated and impressed the discourse upon the audience. In 1780, the chapel narrowly escaped being pulled down by the rioters, who had escaped from Clerkenwell prison, as the former proprietor had incurred their displeasure; but it was saved from destruction by one of the mob, who informed the rest that it now belonged to the Countess of Huntingdon, and that his mother went there. The liturgical form of service was regularly used; and much attention was paid to the "psalmody of the Lord's house." Immediately after the opening of the chapel, the Countess established a choir, and requested her talented organist at Bath, to assist Charles Wesley's son, of whom she remarks, "the King says he is equal to Handel," in forming a powerful band of singers. Shrubsole, a noted composer, was the organist of the chapel.

During the lifetime of the Countess, Spafields became the centre of her sphere of usefulness, and her town residence. She lived in the house adjoining the chapel, which was then so openly situated that, from her drawing-room window, she could see the distant hamlets of Highgate and Hampstead; there she transacted the principal business of her Connexion; there she died; and thence she was buried. For nearly half a century, the pulpit was supplied by a succession of ministers, according to the original plan of the Connexion; but at length local changes, and other circumstances, induced the desire for a settled pastor. In the year 1846, the Rev. T. E. Thoresby, the present minister, was unanimously invited by the people; by whose faithful ministry, the congregation—which for many years was perhaps the largest and wealthiest in the metropolis, but had become reduced by local influences—has revived, and now occupies a commanding position. The lease of the chapel expired in 1842, and great anxiety was felt by the congregation as to the probability of renewing it. The Trustees of the Connexion not only refused to assist, but even decided to relinquish this, the finest chapel in the Connexion; the Executive Committee of the Conference, therefore, took the matter up, and, through the kindness of Alderman Challis, secured a temporary lease. At length, after many disappointments, a new lease for thirty-one years from Midsummer, 1855, was kindly granted by the Marquis of Northampton, on exceedingly favourable terms; the chapel was thoroughly repaired and beautified; and large school-rooms were erected. The various institutions connected with the chapel are now in a most flourishing condition.

During the time Lady Huntingdon was engaged in these transactions respecting Spafields chapel, she was regulating the affairs of her Connexion. She moved among her Societies with great activity, visited her principal chapels, journeyed into fresh districts with her ministers, and appointed the circuits of her students. At Bath she greatly enjoyed the society of Lady Glenorchy, who had now left Scotland, and was establishing, with Lady Hope, chapels in Devonshire and Somersetshire. Before the decision of the ecclesiastical court frightened clergymen from her chapels, Bath was supplied by Venn, Toplady, and other popular preachers, whose ministrations were very acceptable to the people. In the year 1780, a few persons in the congregation, disapproving of the liturgical service, separated, and formed themselves into an Independent church. They maintained themselves with great difficulty till 1785; when the Rev. T. Tuppen became their pastor; whose ministry was so successful, that his congregation of twenty-five persons, who first heard him, increased to nearly eight hundred in a few years. Argyle chapel was erected for him, and opened October 4th, 1790; and when the health of Mr. Tuppen declined, the Rev. William Jay became his successor, and laboured at Bath for more than fifty years. The chapel continued to be supplied by able and devoted ministers, especially by Dr. Haweis; it was for a long period the resort of the nobility, when visiting the fashionable city; and for many years has been favoured with the labours of the Rev. John Owen, who still attracts a large and wealthy audience to listen to the glad tidings of salvation.

For some time past there had existed a misunderstanding between Lady Huntingdon and the trustees of Whitefield's chapels; which arose from the conduct of certain individuals connected with the Gloustershire Association. Gloucester and Cheltenham had for many years enjoyed the labours of her chaplain and ministers. Messrs. Venn, Madan, Talbot, and others had preached in the churches; and Lord Dartmouth had thrown open his house at Cheltenham for divine service. The Countess had been there several times, and expressed the hope "to be enabled to pay attention to this interesting field of labour." Soon after the establishment of her College, the Gloucester Association requested the aid of her students; and she sent some of them to preach at Cheltenham, and other parts of Gloucestershire. From several incidents which transpired, she suspected a design to seduce her students, and get possession of her chapels. The possibility of such an event filled her with the greatest alarm: and she commissioned Mr. Berridge to wait on the trustees in London, and privately ascertain their intentions. He assured her that her suspicions were groundless, for "the trustees have been your hearty friends and faithful servants." She, however, could not dismiss the impression she had received; and the unfriendly feeling they manifested towards Spafield's chapel, and the conduct of the Gloucester Association, confirmed her suspicions. She had been requested to supply a chapel in Cheltenham with her students; and, among others, sent Mr. Shenstone, whom, after a short stay, she ordered to France, and sent another student to supply his place. Shenstone, however, refused to remove; and the Countess entered into a correspondence with the managers, and at length withdrew her sevices from Cheltenham.

Mr. Shenstone remained in the town, and established a small Baptist congregation, which with a little Wesleyan chapel, and the parish church, constituted for some time the only accommodation for public worship in Cheltenham. In the year 1808 the foundation of a chapel was laid by Rowland Hill, on the plan of her Ladyship's Connexion; which was opened in the following year, and was supplied by various ministers, until the Rev. John Brown was appointed the resident pastor. In 1816, Robert Capper, Esq., came to reside at Cheltenham, and built, at his own expense, a handsome and commodious place of worship, called Portland chapel, which after a short time, was vested in the hands of the Connexion trustees. The chapel was supplied by a rotation of ministers till the Rev. E. Parry became the pastor; and after his removal to London, the Rev. L. J. Wake was appointed, and still continues to discharge his ministrations in Cheltenham.

Unpleasant differences also arose respecting the Welsh Association, in which Rowland Hill was involved. Lady Huntingdon had taken the deepest interest in the career of this celebrated minister, and had befriended him, when exposed to the opposition of his family. He invariably treated her with great respect; but his exuberant wit sometimes led him to say things in preaching, which, on reflection, he wished he had not uttered. He appears to have given her great offence, as she says, "by taking possession of two congregations the College had laboured in, and raised to me at my great expense; and trying every means to reflect and bring disgrace upon us all, by trying to divide my friends from me, and so taking us all up, at times, as his merry-andrews into the pulpit, and leaving a bitter sting, as far as he could, through his evil jokes. All this," she adds, "though not fair nor upright, I should have so far despised as, for peace' sake, to have passed over; but it is the worm that lies at the bottom of the gourd in Wales." Mr. Hill expressed his sorrow at having offended her, and afterwards proposed to atone for his faults by preaching at her chapels in

London; but she could not forget how he had treated her, and deemed it necessary to forbid him preaching in her pulpits, lest he should cause the same unhappy dissensions as had taken place in Wales. She, however, entertained a high opinion of his talents; and when he erected Surrey chapel, in 1782, she sent him a liberal donation, as a mark of her approbation of his earnest zeal and piety. She says, "Though I have seen sufficient cause to exclude him from serving in my chapels, *for the present,* yet I cordially rejoice in the success that has attended his faithful labours. My heart's desire and prayer to God is, that this undertaking may prosper most abundantly, and that very many souls may there be gathered to the true Shiloh, such as will be his joy and crown in the day of the Lord Jesus Christ."

CHAPTER XXIV. A.D. 1781—1783.

EXTRAORDINARY TIMES AND MEASURES.—VAST INCREASE OF LABOUR.—TRIALS OF THE COUNTESS.—READING.—ITINERANT PREACHING OF FOUR CLERGYMEN THROUGHOUT ENGLAND.—MR. GLASCOTT.—TUNBRIDGE WELLS.—CHARITABLE ABUSES AT ETWALL AND REPTON—VALUE OF LADY HUNTINGDON'S COLLEGE.—PRAYERS FOR HER STUDENTS.—DEMAND FOR ORDAINED MINISTERS.—FIRST ORDINATION AT SPAFIELDS.

When an urgent and important work has to be immediately accomplished, the earnest mind will not be very fastidious in selecting the means to accomplish it. The manner in which it is effected will be forgotten in the great end that is realized. The rules of art may be violated, the accustomed routine departed from, and the work roughly accomplished; yet far more good may have resulted than could have been secured by a strict adherence to an established order. Circumstances often justify the use of extraordinary measures; and honour, instead of censure, is usually given to those fearless and heroic minds, who use singular efforts to rescue men from impending dangers. Lady Huntingdon felt that the sad condition of England justified her in the means she employed to accomplish her blessed work. She saw the spiritual darkness which was overclouding the people; she was thoroughly acquainted with the character of the agency already in existence, and had witnessed how insufficient it was to reach the masses of the people;

and she directed the energies of her powerful mind, and enlisted her ardent feelings, to bring the sound of the gospel within the hearing of the people, and to warn, instruct and allure them by its peaceful strains. Instead of being honoured for her work, her labours were denounced as irregular, and her name was blackened with reproach. She, however, could not give up her endeavour to save souls; and every year her sphere expanded, and her labours increased. Her name was known throughout the British Isles; her students visited the towns and villages of the country; thousands looked up to her for guidance and support; and every day fresh calls came to her Ladyship for her assistance. She says, "I have known this work forty years, and never have I known such various prosperity attending it."

It would be almost impossible to convey any accurate idea of the vast amount of labour which she had at this time upon her hands, and the care and anxiety which she experienced on behalf of her chapels. The College was full of devoted students, in whom the spirit of Christ glowed with great power; the congregations in England and Ireland were flourishing in numbers and spirituality; and the benighted districts were struggling with the light she had brought into them. Lady Huntingdon, however, had to pass through many trials, and experienced much sorrow, as well as great joy. Her health was failing her, that she was seldom free from indisposition; her mind was almost weighed down by the increasing business of her work; and her heart was kept in a constant state of alarm by the opposition she met with from wicked men. She says, "I am a poor worm, ready to be crushed every moment, yet reviving afresh to fight the Lord's battles." The persecution of the ecclesiastical courts drove some of her finest preachers from her chapels; the differences with Whitefield's trustees caused her great uneasiness; the attempts which were made to seduce her students, and rob her of her chapels, excited her indignation; and the fickleness of some of her congregations cast a shade over her prospects.

At Reading, her heart had been greatly cheered by the evangelical conduct of Mr. Cadogan, who had become truly converted to Christ, and was now more zealous *for*, than he had been *against*, the truth. The Countess wrote him a long letter, in answer to his request for her advice; in which she exhorts him to be bold in his Master's service—to keep the cross ever before the minds of his hearers—to warm his soul by the recollection that there are millions perishing in sin—and to make the Saviour the sum and substance of his preaching. Towards the close of 1781, her mind was greatly distressed by unpleasant differences which sprang up in her congregation at Reading, when some of the people wished to have a settled minister, and to be organized as a dissenting church. Lady Huntingdon had always acted on the plan of supplying her chapels with a rotation of ministers, as best calculated to keep alive the interest of the congregation; and she refused to be fettered in her operations. She, therefore, communicated to her friends at Reading, that it would be impossible for her to countenance them as "a dry formal body," and that, if such was their determination, her services would be withdrawn.

Notwithstanding these discouragements, she had the happiness of seeing that God was blessing her labours, and that the fields were covered with a golden harvest, and awaiting the services of her labourers. She determined to send her most distinguished ministers throughout the country, and gather the fruits into the garner of her Master. She appointed four clergymen to the work, and divided England into four districts, throughout which they were to itinerate, and blow the gospel trumpet. She printed a circular-letter, and addressed it to her various Societies, in which she says:—

"From the various calls of many of the counties in England, it appears an important consideration to us, and alike to all, that every means in our power should be engaged for those many thousands lying in darkness and in the shadow of death, that the voice of the gospel, by our faithful ministers, should reach them also. For this best end, it was concluded, at a late meeting, that the only means effectually to reach the multitudes was, that the four principal ministers, Mr. Glascott, Mr. Wills, Mr. Taylor, and Mr. Piercy, should for three months visit universally, in four different departments, and, thus severally taken, preach through the counties, towns, and villages of the kingdom, by a general voice or proclamation of the glorious gospel of peace to lost sinners."

The Countess requested contributions from her friends towards the expense, and set a noble example by giving fifty pounds towards it; and urged them in their various localities to aid these ministers in their work of faith. The churches caught the spirit of their leader, and forwarded to the London Committee at Spafields a large sum of money. The four clergymen set out on their respective journeys, and everywhere met with great kindness and success. They sent her regular reports, which were afterwards published, with an interesting account of the work by the Rev. T. Pentycross. They often encountered the most marvellous incidents. They preached in chapels and halls, in streets and lanes, in open-fields and commons, wherever and whenever the people would hear them. At Darlaston, fifteen hundred colliers and nailers turned out to welcome Mr. Glascott, who took the midland circuit. At Dudley, two thousand persons crowded the streets; at Nottingham, more than five thousand flocked to the market-cross. Mr. Wills took the western circuit, and preached with great success among the tin-miners, and the agriculturalists. The northern circuit formed a fine sphere of labour; and at one place, twelve thousand persons assembled in a hollow ground, where they were arranged in the form of an amphitheatre, and presented a deeply impressive spectacle. No one can peruse the public documents without acknowledging the great good that was affected. Many were converted to the Lord; the gospel standard was erected in many towns and villages; and small congregations were gathered, which under the fostering care of the students grew into important churches. England requires now just such an extensive itinerancy by able and devoted ministers.

Lady Huntingdon met with many difficulties from the want of pious clergymen to assist her in her efforts. The unpleasant affairs connected with her estates in Georgia, caused Mr. Piercy to withdraw his services. Mr. Glascott was presented by Mr. Ireland with the living at Hatherleigh, in Devonshire; and a long and interesting correspondence ensued between him and the Countess respecting his future position, and his ability to serve her. She had cherished the hope that he would have remained with her; she told him that she would continue his salary for his life, and assured him of her undiminished affection. He replied to her letters, and stated his determination not to accept the living, if the Bishop insisted on his constant residence; and the Countess graphically pictured her desolate condition, and her great grief, if his name was to be added to the list of those who had left her. She was, therefore, greatly surprised when the tidings reached her, that Mr. Glascott had not carried out the intentions he had proposed to her; and when the Bishop required him on his oath to reside in his parish, and to give up all other efforts, instead of resigning, he had signed the deed, and quietly settled down in a country parish. She wrote him a long letter, in which she justly reprimands him for his hesitancy, for deserting her and the Lord's work when she was in difficulties, for contradicting his assertions, that nothing should prevent his services among her societies, and for treating her friendship and kindness to him in such an uncourteous manner. She, however, expressed her firm conviction that God would raise up many faithful labourers, and would take care that his glory should not be tarnished.

Lady Huntingdon had, for some years past, been very anxious to have a resident minister at Tunbridge Wells, to superintend the work in the southern district. She, however, experienced many disappointments, which then led her to dismiss the subject from her mind. The great difficulty in obtaining the assistance of evangelical clergymen, and the bitter efforts of her persecutors, induced her to offer to place the chapel in the hands of the Rev. W. Taylor, and to give him the entire control of the work in Kent. He was still to co-operate with Mr. Wills, in London, to preach at Bath in the winter, and to have the services of her students, or of a seceding ordained minister. She says, "Should you approve it, the sooner it is done, the better, as an ordination must be soon, or the dissenters will have all our congregations, and our students also." Mr. Taylor accepted the offer; and this chapel was supplied by various ministers till the year 1809, when the Rev. John Finley was unanimously requested to become the pastor, under whose zealous and devoted labours for forty-one years, the congregation steadily increased, and many illustrious hearers were brought to the Saviour. His successor, the Rev. George Jones, is the present minister of her Ladyship's chapel.

The Countess, in addition to the enormous labours she was regulating in all parts of England and Wales, was ever on the alert to enter upon fresh fields of usefulness, where she saw a prospect of success. The limits of this volume prevent us following her on her usual journeys to the chapels she had erected; and her letters alone would form a large and interesting volume. Nor did she confine her efforts to the religious condition of the people. She watched the movements of all parties with unwearied attention; exposed, and attempted to remedy, every thing prejudicial to morality; and investigated abuses, as far as her influence and opportunity extended. In the year 1782, her attention was directed to the state of the Hospital of Etwall, and the Free School of Repton, in the county of Derby. These charities had been founded and endowed by Sir John Port for the reception of poor, disabled day-labourers in the Hospital, and the free education of poor boys in the School. In the course of time, the property had very much increased in value; but the number of the poor, and the allowance they received, remained the same. Three trustees, Lord Huntingdon, Lord Chesterfield, and the Rev. W Cotton, held the property in trust, and appointed governors to manage the affairs of the Institution. Lady Huntingdon instantly made searching inquiries into the real state of these charities; and when aware of the existence of gross misappropriation of funds, she addressed letters to each of the trustees informing them of the abuses, and recommending them to appoint a suitable person thoroughly to investigate the charities. Her letters on this subject evince extraordinary talents; and show most distinctly, that her powers of mind, in her seventy-fourth year, were by no means impaired. The list of queries, which she proposed should be considered, manifests much legal knowledge, a great discrimination, and humanity, and, at the same time, a resolute determination to detect and remedy existing abuses. She proposed that the will of the benefactor should be examined, the condition of the estate thoroughly gone into, and the various items of receipts and expenditure scrutinized. She modestly hinted at the best means of increasing the revenues of the charity, and of placing the establishment in conformity with the will of the benevolent founder. Her son and

Lord Chesterfield warmly applauded her zeal, and approved her suggestions; and though the other trustee did not answer her communications, she had the satisfaction of seeing the charity renovated and flourishing.

The position in which the ecclesiastical law-suits had placed Lady Huntingdon, enabled her to appreciate the value of her College. She could not sufficiently bless God, for permitting her to establish that valuable institution, and for shielding her from persecution till it had trained up a band of holy ministers. She watched over her students with maternal care, and maintained a correspondence with them, when they were labouring in distant places. She cheered the desponding, encouraged the timid, fired the zeal of the fainting, and moderated the impetuosity of the ardent. She was the centre of all their movements, the spring of all their activities, the source of the mighty influences which streamed in all directions; yet she was profoundly humble, and looked up to Heaven alone for strength and success. She says, "I have never sent a student forth to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, without special prayer and supplication to God, that he would be graciously pleased to bless the feeble instruments, and enable them to deliver, with fidelity and zeal, his proclamation of mercy to the guilty and rebellious children of men—to enrich their understandings—to cultivate their talents—to endue them with hearts of deeper sensibility for the ignorance and misery of their fellow men—and crown their labours with a harvest of immortal souls, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb."

It cannot be wondered at, that, animated with the example of their noble patroness, and blessed with the heavenly influences which her fervent prayers drew upon them, the students were very successful in their labours. The little preaching-stations expanded into flourishing congregations; the "two or three" formed the nucleus of important societies; and the regular administration of the ordinances, as well as the preaching of the gospel, was demanded. The Lord's Supper and Baptism had hitherto been administered by episcopally-ordained clergymen, as frequently as they could visit the different localities; but now the demand for their services was so great, and their number so small, that many places were threatened with the loss of their spiritual ordinances. The attention of the Countess was, therefore, directed towards supplying this want. Before the persecution arose, she had been enabled to secure episcopal ordination for some of her students; but now it could not be procured, or if so, they were not permitted to labour in her Connexion. After much consultation with Messrs. Taylor and Wills, and prayer, she resolved to have six of her students ordained on the plan which was deemed most appropriate, and which has been continued in her Connexion.

On Sunday, March 9th, 1783, a large congregation was assembled at Spafields chapel to witness the first ordination. At nine o'clock in the morning, the Revs. W. Taylor and T. Wills entered the chapel with six young men from the College. The clergymen took their seats at each end of the communion-table, the candidates sat in front, and the committee of the chapel at each side. After singing a hymn, Mr. Taylor fervently prayed for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on their solemn engagement, and affectionately commended the candidates and all Christian ministers to the protection of Heaven He then addressed the congregation, and narrated to them the peculiar difficulty in which her Ladyship's ministers were placed. The ecclesiastical laws prevented them, as ministers of the Establishment, preaching the gospel, except under such restraints as would necessitate their relinquishing the great work in which they were engaged. As honest men they could not violate established laws, nor give up the work to which God had evidently called them. They were, therefore, necessitated to shelter themselves under the Toleration Act; and thus preach the gospel, and expound the doctrines of that church, whose discipline prevented them, while within its pale, carrying on their labours. They felt that Christ had given them a commission to preach the gospel to every creature; and they separated from the Establishment, solely that they might conscientiously carry out their mission, and promote the spread of the gospel in benighted England, and the welfare of immortal souls. Mr. Taylor then addressed the candidates on the difficulties and responsibilities of the ministerial office; prayed for them; and read the scriptures in Ezek. xxxiii. 1—16.

After singing the hymn, "Captain of thine enlisted host," Mr. Wills rose, and informed the congregation that one of the candidates would read the Articles of Faith, which had been signed by himself, Mr. Taylor, and the candidates, and was to be signed by all the ministers of Lady Huntingdon's Connexion. This Confession of Faith consists of fifteen articles, which embody the evangelical doctrines contained in the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England. After this, each rose in succession, and narrated the circumstances which led to his conversion, and his call to the ministry. Mr. Wills then gave a clear and forcible address; in which he pointed out to the people that the Scriptures gave them the right of ordaining to the work of the ministry, and showed, by entering fully into the circumstances of their past history and present position, the necessity of now exercising that right. He then offered the ordination prayer; after which, the two clergymen laid their hands on the heads of two of the candidates, who advanced to the rails, and putting the Bible into their hands, repeated the words, "Take thou authority to preach the word of God, and to administer the appointed ordinances, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Two others then advanced when the same ceremony was repeated till all were designated to their office. After singing, Mr. Wills, from the pulpit, gave a solemn charge to the ministers, and then administered the sacrament. Though the whole service lasted more than five hours, it was witnessed by the congregation with the greatest attention and solemnity. The event was important in the career of Lady Huntingdon; it gave solidity to her separation, and compactness to her movements; and enabled her to supply the wants of her congregations, and to raise up a band of ordained ministers to feed the flock of Christ, and to administer the ordinances of religion, and to consolidate the extensive revival of religion, which had been effected by the zealous efforts of herself and her coadjutors.

CHAPTER XXV. A.D. 1783—1790.

EXERTIONS OF LADY HUNTINGDON IN CUMBERLAND.—CHAPELS AT BOOTLE, WHITEHAVEN, AND KENDAL.—ANXIETY OF THE COUNTESS.—CHAPELS AT WEYMOUTH, HEREFORD, AND BIRMINGHAM. — ANECDOTE. — LORD DOUGLAS. — INTENDED VISIT OF THE COUNTESS TO GERMANY.— LETTER TO HER NORWICH FRIENDS. — POPISH PLOTS.—ANECDOTE.—SEPARATION OF MR. WILLS FROM THE CONNEXION.—SION CHAPEL.—ANECDOTE.

THE revival of religion had now spread over nearly the whole of England. Every county had been traversed by her preachers, and had resounded with the glad tidings of salvation; and in most, congregations had been gathered, chapels erected, and societies formed. The principal towns formed the centres of large districts, where the gospel was preached, and the people gathered together. From the lakes of Cumberland to the tin-mines of Cornwall; from the mountains of Wales to the fens of Lincolnshire, or the wilds of Sussex, the name of Lady Huntingdon was known and honoured. The county of Cumberland had received considerable attention, Messrs. Romaine and De Courcy had preached in several of the parish churches—especially in that of Bootle—and were the means of reviving the cause of religion in those parts. On one occasion, Romaine was invited to preach at Bootle; and on ascending the pulpit-stairs, he found that the door had been fastened, he suspected, by a blacksmith who was a noted enemy to evangelical religion.

He desired the clerk to sing a long psalm while he obtained a hammer, with which he speedily opened the pulpit door, and preached to the people the word of life. When the gospel was expelled from the church, a barn was obtained, and licensed for public worship, in which one of the students officiated. The place soon became too small, and a commodious chapel was erected by the munificence of J. Whitridge, Esq., which was opened July 30th, 1780. The students undertook the charge of this congregation, and of one which had been gathered in the sea-port town of Whitehaven. At Kendal, a town delightfully situated in Westmoreland, Lady Huntingdon erected a chapel, which was included in the Cumberland district.

She had many things to distress her in the course of her labours, sometimes from the conduct of her students and congregations. Mr. Derbyshire, a student, who had been supplying large congregations in Staffordshire, removed from his appointed station without consulting her, and repaired to Whitehaven where Mr. Jones was labouring. She could not permit her plans to be disarranged; she severely reprimanded him for his conduct, and wrote to Mr. Jones, stating that she had requested Mr. Gray from Kendal, and Williams from Bootle, "to go over and assure the people of my resolution, that he, Derbyshire, must leave the Connexion, if he does not leave Whitehaven directly." Her Ladyship was also much distressed at the attempts which were still being made to induce her students to desert her. She often expressed her abhorrence at such meanness; and in a letter to one of Wesley's preachers, who wished to join her Connexion, she says, "I am exceedingly cautious who I receive out of other Connexions, thinking it by no means honourable to engage another's friend from his help; and though this is shamefully practised in other bodies of people, yet I look upon it as base, and in every sense unwarrantable, and as wanting common moral honesty in any who so practise it." In another letter, she calls it "a practice I must despise from its meanness and baseness."

Lady Huntingdon had erected a chapel at Weymouth, a town in Dorsetshire which had been brought into repute as a fashionable watering-place by her intimate friend, Ralph Allen, Esq., of Prior Park, Bath, and was now much resorted to by the nobility. After a season of great prosperity, there arose an unpleasant division among the people, which occasioned the resignation of some of the managers. Two of the students also were charged with serious offences by Mr. Wickers; and the Countess requested her attorney to institute the strictest investigation into the whole affair. There arose also at this period some difficulties connected with the chapel she was erecting at Hereford, which occasioned her considerable embarrassment and anxiety. Mrs. Paul, who had been her correspondent in Dublin, removed to Hereford, and drew her attention to the spiritual destitution of the locality. Lady Huntingdon resolved to erect a place of worship in this city, and treated with Mr. Stone for a building to be converted into a chapel, towards which a lady contributed a handsome sum. Disputes, however, soon arose respecting the control of the property, while the whole responsibility rested upon her; and a voluminous correspondence ensued, which the curious can consult elsewhere. Thus the path she was treading was full of difficulties, yet her faith enabled her to conquer them, and to advance in her career.

Birmingham, and the surrounding neighbourhood, had frequently been favoured with the services of her ministers. Shortly after the Rev. J. Ryland, curate to Mr. Venn, had been appointed to St. Mary's chapel, in 1774, the Countess sent some of her students into the district, who preached in the streets of Birmingham, and particularly on a vacant spot of ground in Steelhouse Lane, where Whitefield had often preached. A few years after, Lady Huntingdon was offered, at a trifling ground-rent, the lease of the large theatre in King-Street; and in a letter, dated College, June 5th, 1785, she says, "Birmingham's great play-house is *now mine,* and will hold five thousand people! Hereford chapel is ready for roofing. Glory! Glory be to Our God, who only could do these wondrous things. I can add no more, being so weak." The Countess must, however, have been misinformed as to the capacity of the building, for it contained but one gallery, and could not have held more than *one* thousand people. It was a noble sight to witness the place densely packed with persons eager to hear the gospel. The first minister was the Rev. John Bradford, of Wadham College, Oxford, who was very popular with the people. A pulpit was erected on the front of the stage; and the people crowded into the boxes, pit, and gallery, and even around the preacher on the stage. They listened with great attention; but whenever Mr. Bradford said anything striking, they immediately clapped their hands, as if applauding some dramatic scene. The preacher was obliged to stop till the bursts of applause had subsided; and this was continued for some weeks, till, at length, the audience became more solemn, and ceased to manifest their approbation in this rousing manner.

This theatre was afterwards converted into a chapel; and when Mr. Bradford, a few years after, maintained erroneous doctrines, he was expelled from this place of worship; the congregation was scattered, and rent into factions; and when the Rev. T. Bennett was appointed, in 1805, his first audience consisted of only three or four persons. His labours, however, were so successful, that the place was enlarged, and three additional galleries built; and after thirteen years' ministry, the Rev. John

Jones became his assistant, and, six weeks after, the sole minister, by the death of the venerable pastor. At the expiration of the lease, the property relapsed to the governors of the Free Grammar School, who demanded a rental of £120 per annum. The congregation deemed this sum exorbitant for an old unsightly building; and commenced a new gothic chapel, which was opened by Dr. Harris, and the Rev. J. Sherman, May 16th, 1841. When, however, the London and North-Western railway passed through Birmingham, this edifice was pulled down for the line; the amount of compensation was decided by a jury; and as the chapel was not vested in trust, the Directors paid the money into the Court of Chancery; at the close of the investigation of accounts, the remaining money was invested in trust, in conformity with the Conference deed; and a chapel has been purchased in Gooch Street for the use of the congregation.

The following curious anecdote was related by Lady Ann Erskine to one of the ministers in the Connexion:—Lady Huntingdon had been accustomed to keep in her house the sum of three hundred pounds, in order to defray the expenses of her funeral; and at this time it was her wish to be buried in white satin. This money was considered so sacred, that upon no account was it to be touched. It happened that she was much pressed for want of money to advance on behalf of the chapel at Birmingham. She said to Lady Ann, "I want three hundred pounds! I have no money in the house but that put by for my funeral. For the first time in my life, I feel inclined to let that go." Lady Ann replied, "I shall be glad when *that money* is out of the house. You can trust God with your *soul;* why not with your *funeral?*" The Countess took the money; and the very day she did so, a gentleman, who could not have known anything of these circumstances, sent her a cheque for three hundred pounds, to aid her in her benevolent labours. Thus God encouraged her to depend upon him, and honoured her faith and liberality.

A circumstance occurred to Lady Huntingdon, about this time, which wonderfully displayed the malice of her enemies, and the kind interposition of Providence. Lord Douglas, a descendant from an ancient Scottish family, had resided some years at Brussels, where he lived as a professed Papist. This nobleman was inflamed with great zeal for the prosperity of his church; and planned a most diabolical scheme to inflict a severe blow on evangelical religion in England. He was well aware of the influence and exertions of Lady Huntingdon; and he thought that if he could but get her into his power, and destroy her life, her plans would become disorganized, and the Papal church would be able to carry out its designs on the people of England, without incurring the opposition of the acknowledged leader of all zealous Protestants. In order to mask his intention, he came over to England, and pretended that his mind had been enlightened to see the errors of his church, and made a recantation of the Romish faith. He regularly attended the Lock chapel, and other places where the gospel was preached; obtained an interview with the Countess, and ingratiated himself into her favour; and departed for Brussels with the reputation of being a firm Protestant, and an ardent promoter of evangelical religion.

In the year 1785, Lord Douglas sent a letter to Lady Huntingdon, informing her that an opportunity then offered of introducing the gospel in that superstitious country, that he had a cave which should be at her service, that whoever was sent over should be under his patronage and protection, and that he should be happy to receive a visit from her Ladyship and Mr. Wills, as he had much at heart the introduction of Protestantism and of gospel truth into these regions of Popish darkness. She looked carefully at the whole affair; and regarding it as a favourable opening in a foreign land, she thanked him for his invitation, and assured him that she with Mr. Wills, would pay him a visit in the summer. Her Ladyship was at this time at her College in Wales, and busily prepared for her visit to Germany. She fixed the day on which she would meet Mr. Wills at Spafields, and embark for the Continent, and had a new carriage prepared expressly for the expedition. Her soul was filled with the most joyful anticipation; and she wrote to her ministers and managers, to aid her in her fresh enterprise by their prayers and contributions. The following letter to her friends at Norwich, dated College, April 10th, 1787, refers to this contemplated visit to the Continent.

"My very worthy and beloved Friends,—Sickness and business daily almost overpower my old age; this will account for any neglect of mine, as my heart ever remains the same to you. I am most truly obliged by your kind letter just received; and though setting out on my journey to Germany, I could not let your kind, warm-hearted and most Christian letter be unanswered. I have a large chapel taken for me at Brussels; and this for the occasional use of all the ministers in my Connexion in England. Time must shew the wise and gracious dispensations of my few evil days yet remaining. As for the envy, malice, and jealousy of other parties, I beg the Lord to pity them; but blessed be his name, to the most unworthy he yet shows his loving kindness and tender mercies. Above six hundred Protestant families are now in Brussels, and much expectation is raised for my establishment there. Give me your prayers for faith, patience, and humility, that neither men nor devils may move me from the hope of the gospel, which I have been called to glory in, as my only earthly honour. My heart, prayers, cries, and tears will be with you and for you, that the Lord may make and keep all to the end. It would fail me to tell you the abundant and overflowing instances of his love, which he is daily affording, by the spread of the blessed gospel of peace far and wide. Fourteen young ministers ordained at the College promise well, and many great and bitter trials the Lord is bringing me through, to praise him. Five chapels, new and large, and very great congregations now just establishing. This, with calls from all quarters obliges us to be diligent in business, as well as fervent in spirit. And now, my worthy, old, and kind friends, try to raise up some simple-hearted young men that know something of the Lord, for the very poor in the villages, that by reading and prayer they may help them. I leave the half I have for the support of the College and other things, as my heart is with you all. And as for a season, the withdrawing my maintenance abroad must be a great loss, so I do earnestly beg and entreat that the travelling-fund, by either subscription or collection, be all the committee's care, everywhere; and if I drop, all from me must cease; so this collection, once or twice a year, is all I ask, as this is the only means of carrying the gospel to the poor and ignorant in dark places, where their poverty cannot call for it. You may have a direction to me from Spafields to Germany. Should I arrive there *alive*, it is but three days longer than your letter to College, and now farewell! farewell, my dear old faithful friends; and if we never more meet to see each other below, we shall sing 'Worthy the Lamb,' with heart and voice, to all eternity. O blessed exchange from sin, sorrow, and misery, to glorify Jesus to eternity, in the smiles of his countenance! May this be our blessed lot! and, as ever, so remains your faithful friend,

S. HUNTINGDON."

On her way to London, the Countess stopped at the different towns where she had procured chapels, in order to regulate their affairs; and was thus unavoidably de tained in the country beyond the day appointed for her embarkation. The hand of God was remarkably manifested in this; for, a few days after her arrival in London, letters were received from the Continent, informing her and Mr. Wills that there was a concerted plot to get them over, seize them as heretics, and put an end to their lives! Had they sailed for Brussels before the arrival of these letters, they would have inevitably fallen into the hands of their persecutors, and become the victims of Satan's rage. The justice of God was also conspicuously displayed; for, on the very day that Lady Huntingdon left Wales for London, Lord Douglas suddenly dropped down, and expired! Thus Christ's people were shielded from danger, while the wickedness of the wicked fell upon his own head. The Countess was rescued from the evil machinations of her foes; and she lifted up her heart to God in gratitude for his preserving kindness. She did not, however, lose sight of the good she might have been able to effect among the German States; and obtained accurate and extensive information respecting their condition. Dr. E. Johnstone, of Birmingham, once visited her, after this event, at her house in Spafields, when she consulted him respecting the state of religion in Germany. She astonished him by her intimate knowledge of the princes of that land, and informed him how much she wished to send missionaries into the benighted districts of Germany.

Although the Popish plots of Lady Huntingdon's enemies were defeated, the seeds of discord were sown between her Ladyship and Mr. Wills, which led to the separation of her chaplain, and some of her ministers, from the Connexion, in the year 1788. Party-feeling and jealousy had been fostered by some of the Spafield's friends; and the Countess, being rather of a hasty and imperious disposition, was swayed by the misrepresentations of the foes of Mr. Wills, and was so much incensed at some indiscrete reflections upon her, contained in letters which he never intended to reach her eyes, that she allowed her feelings to triumph over her judgment, and dismissed him from the honorable and useful position he had so ably occupied. These blots on her Christian character are deeply to be deplored, though they are to be found in the best and greatest of earth's inhabitants, and remind us that it is vain to expect here the perfection of that world, where every stain will be removed.

Towards the close of 1789, the attention of Lady Huntingdon was directed to a large circular building in the east of London, near to Whitechapel church. It had been erected about four years before, by the proprietor, Mr. Jones, for the purpose of public amusements, and especially for the feats of horsemanship. Mr. Jones, however, found it did not answer his expectations; and, in 1790, he offered to let the building to her Ladyship for 78 years, the remainder of his lease, at a rental of £130 per annum. The Countess signed the agreement, and made the necessary alterations to adapt it for the celebration of divine worship. The dressing-rooms for the actors were converted into a vestry; the stage was fitted up with pews, lined with scarlet, and was called the "throne," in the front of which were the desks and pulpit. The pit, or circle, where horsemanship had been exhibited, contained six hundred free sittings, and the spacious galleries were prepared with pews. This chapel was dedicated to the service of God, November 28th, 1790, by the Rev. Dr. Ford in the morning, and the Rev. David Jones, rector of Llangan, in the afternoon and evening. A committee of managers was appointed, and a rotation of ministers supplied the pulpit until recently, with the exception of short intervals when settled pastors were stationed there. The congregation is now reviving under the energetic ministry of the Rev. J. Thomas.

While the Countess was thus adding to her responsibilities, and relying on the goodness of God to carry her through her labours, some timid people became alarmed at her increasing liabilities. A gentleman, James Oldham Esq., who assisted her in the management of Spafields chapel, called one day at her house to remonstrate with her, on the impropriety of entering into engagements for another chapel in the metropolis, without having the means of honourably fulfilling them. Before he left the house, her letters arrived; and as she opened one of them, her countenance suddenly brightened, and her tears began to flow. It was to the following effect:—"An individual, who has heard of Lady Huntingdon's exertion to spread the gospel, requests her acceptance of the inclosed draft to assist her in the laudable undertaking." The draft was for five hundred pounds; the exact sum for which she stood engaged. "Here," she said, "take this, and pay for the chapel, and be no longer faithless but believing." Thus was the Countess encouraged to go forward in her work, nothing doubting; and although she was sometimes anxious about fulfilling her engagements, she was fully assured that the Lord would provide for all her wants while she was faithfully engaged in his service.

CHAPTER XXVI. A.D. 1790—1791.

THE LAST OF THE REVIVALISTS.—INCREASING WEAKNESS OF THE COUNTESS.—DEATH OF LORD HUNTINGDON.—PREPARATIONS FOR DEATH.—REMOVAL OF THE COLLEGE TO CHESHUNT.—STATE OF THE CONNEXION.—THE GENERAL ASSOCIATION.—HER LADYSHIP'S WILL.—MISSIONARIES TO OTAHEITE.—HER LAST ILLNESS.—HAPPY STATE.—DEATH.—CHARACTER.—INFLUENCE.—CONCLUSION.

There is something inexpressibly delightful in contemplating the close of the Christian's career, especially when it has been extended beyond the period usually allotted to mortal life. What finer spectacle can there be than that of the aged Christian, whose hairs have whitened, and whose frame has withered in active service, calmly waiting for the voice to summon him home, and yet zealously working in the vineyard, when most of the early labourers have been removed! Such was the position of Lady Huntingdon; and as her days declined, how frequently did she turn her eyes to that better-land, where so many of her loved ones were awaiting her! The dear children, whom God had snatched away from her, that she might live and labour for him alone, were there; those honoured women—her sisters in the flesh and in the gospel—who had assisted her early faith and labours, were there; and the noble circle, that once crowded to her drawing-rooms, and had received through her the blessings of salvation, awaited her arrival to complete it. There were the celebrated ministers—Whitefield, Ingham, Hervey, Shirley, Fletcher, and many others,— who had laboured with her; and the crowds of ransomed sinners who had been brought to the knowledge of Christ through her efforts. Her time, however, had not yet arrived. She was to be the last of the revivalists in the eighteenth century, and was to witness the departure of John Wesley, who died in London, after a short illness, March 2nd, 1791; and of his brother Charles, who expired in the metropolis, only twenty-seven days after him, before she was called to her eternal rest in the following June.

Lady Huntingdon stood alone, like an aged tree around which storms had played and devastated. Throughout her long career, she had often been brought to the verge of the grave, and her life had been despaired of by her friends. Her vigorous constitution sustained her; and enabled her to prosecute her immense labours, notwithstanding her weakness, with unwearied diligence and success. For the last few years, however, it became evident to her friends, that her infirmities were rapidly increasing. Frequently she was so weak as to be scarcely able to write; a painful inflammation in her eyes almost deprived her of sight; and much bodily pain mingled with her daily life. Her sensitive spirit was keenly affected by the sorrows of others; and when the tidings of the decease of any of her valued friends reached her, she gave free expression to her grief and sadness. Her son, the tenth Earl, died October 2nd, 1789; and though a deserved eulogy was paid to his memory for his talents, amiability and erudition, his venerable mother mourned over his infidelity, and felt a severe pang at his death, which was but slightly mitigated by the fact, that on his dying bed, he had requested to see the expelled Oxford student, Mr Matthews, who had impressed him with his conversation at Tunbridge Wells. Her friends were anxiously concerned for the prosperity of the work in which she had been so long engaged. As her increasing frailties indicated that her stay here could not be long protracted, several attempts were made to place the whole in a satisfactory condition before her departure. The College at Trevecca first received their serious attention.

The Institution had been solely supported by Lady Huntingdon, with the aid of a few benefactions from her friends. Her income, however, ceased at her death; and as it only amounted to twelve hundred a year, which, after her son's death, was increased to two thousand two hundred pounds, it prevented her making any permanent provision for the support of the College. About four years before her death, a few friends formed the design of continuing it by voluntary subscriptions, after she was removed. She warmly approved of the plan; the rules were drawn up, and signed by her; and seven trustees were appointed to manage its affairs, with power to fill up vacancies in the trust. The rapid spread of the Connexion rendered it advisable to remove the College to a more central situation, when the lease at Trevecca expired; and before her death, the trustees collected several hundred pounds for the purpose. Shortly after her decease, the lovely spot at Cheshunt, about fourteen miles from London was purchased; whither the library and furniture were removed in the spring of 1792; and on the following anniversary, August 24th, the new College was opened with a series of religious services. It has received the patronage and support of liberal evangelical Christians of various denominations; several munificent legacies have been bequeathed to it; and large subscriptions are yearly contributed to maintain and extend its operations. A neat chapel has been erected on the premises, where the president and senior students preach; and a spacious hall, lecture-rooms, and studies have been built. The College is affiliated with the London University; and the curriculum embraces the subjects which are required by the senate to qualify for degrees, and an extended and elaborate course of divinity. The students sign the Articles of her Ladyship's Connexion on their entrance, read the Liturgical service in the chapel, and remain in the College four years. At first, as at Trevecca, they were employed as evangelists in preaching the gospel, before they were ordained; but latterly, owing to the changes which have occurred in the Connexion, the students are free to select their sphere of labour, either in the Connexion which has the first moral claim on their services, or among other Christian churches. This College embodies the catholic spirit of Lady Huntingdon, has furnished some of the most laborious and useful ministers and missionaries of the Church of Christ, and deserves the increased support of all evangelical Christians. The Rev. Dr. Alliott is now the President, and W. B. Todhunter, Esq., M. A., the Classical Tutor.

Having settled the affairs of the College, her attention was drawn to the state of her Connexion. The labours of her ministers had gathered flourishing congregations to her chapels in different parts of the country. These formed her Ladyship's "*Connexion*;" though the term might more strictly be applied to the members of the "*Society*," which was formed under her auspices. It was the practice among all the Methodists to form their converts into *societies* for mutual edification, which were regulated by elders, under the supervision of the ministers. Lady Huntingdon, during her lifetime, retained in her own hands the power of appointing and removing ministers, and of establishing managers to superintend the secular affairs of her chapels. As her end drew near, the pressure of business, arising from the vast work already in operation, and from the urgent calls daily sent to her, and the conviction that soon her labours here must cease, induced her to invite several ministers and laymen to form themselves into an "Association," for the purpose of aiding her during her lifetime, and perpetuating the Connexion after her death. A plan was drawn out, and sent to every congregation, accompanied by a letter from the Countess. It advocated the formation of a *General Association*—the division of the Connexion into twenty-three districts—the appointment of a committee, composed of the ministers and two laymen, in each district, which was to meet once a quarter, and transmit a report of its proceedings to the London Acting Association—the assembling of the General Association once a year, at which a minister and two laymen were to be deputed to attend from each district, when all the affairs of the Connexion were to be regulated—and the formation of funds necessary to carry on the itinerant labours, &c. This plan was not carried out by the Countess. Several of her friends and congregations opposed it on various grounds; Lady Ann Erskine tried every means to induce her to relinquish it; the Association in London became divided and turbulent; and she at length abandoned the scheme. Her convictions of its importance, however, remained unchanged; and had her health and years permitted, she doubtless would have persevered in it with her accustomed resolution. She saw the great advantage resulting from the Welsh Association; and, by her experience of the difficulties she had encountered, she knew that, unless some such plan were adopted, the Connexion would become the prey of designing men, or, like some stately vessel, be wrecked by unskilful hands. It is much to be regretted that her wise and noble spirit passed away, without placing the whole on a firm basis. Had the Connexion been regularly organized and legally established during her lifetime, and had the trustees and ministers been compelled to adhere to a constituted order, the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion would at this time have occupied one of the most conspicuous positions among the religious denominations in England. The auspicious movement, however, passed; and the golden opportunity has never yet returned.

While the London Association was preparing this plan, she was anxiously considering the best mode of disposing of her chapels and residences. The English law renders all bequests of buildings or land for religious or charitable purposes *null and void;* and all settlements of such property by trust, for these purposes, *invalid,* unless the doner shall survive the disposal twelve months. Her Ladyship was aware of the legal impediments, and her state of health rendered it improbable that she would survive the year, if trust-deeds were executed; she, therefore, bequeathed the chapels and houses to certain persons with unrestricted power over them, trusting that the grace of God would dispose their hearts to employ them in the same spiritual purpose which had engaged her life. Her will, dated January 11th, 1790, gave all her chapels, houses, and furniture therein, and all the residue of her estates and effects to Thomas Haweis and Janetta Payne his wife, Lady Ann Erskine, and John Lloyd; and directed that, as one of these devisees died, a successor should be appointed, until all the property was disposed of, providing that always one of the trustees shall be a minister of her Connexion. By a codicil, she requested her family to confirm this disposition of her property; and as no objection was made to it, at her death the four trustees took possession of her chapels, and strictly carried out the intentions of Lady Huntingdon. Lady A. Erskine was appointed to superintend the whole, as she had been the constant associate and coadjutor of the Countess, and was better acquainted with her mode of procedure than any other person; and till her death in 1804, she regulated the Connexion with great wisdom and success, and by her kind and obliging disposition secured the good esteem and co-operation of all. Lady Ann was a remarkable character. She possessed the talents of the Erskine family, and the catholicity of Lady Huntingdon; and, in the course of her administration, displayed such energy and prudence, tenderness of spirit and firmness of purpose, as commanded the admiration and esteem of her associates in the work.

The venerable Countess was now approaching the close of her long and useful career. Her frailties were becoming more conspicuous, and indicated that her stay on earth would be short. Her mind seemed to increase in strength and activity, as her frame grew weaker; and her heart glowed with heavenly love and peace. She was fast ripening for an inheritance among the saints in light. Sometimes she appeared to catch a glimpse of the celestial mansion; and then her weather-beaten features were lit up with a heavenly glory. The more she rose to heaven, and enjoyed the presence of her Saviour, the more humbly she prostrated herself in the dust, and cast herself on the mercy of the Lord. The great work she had been enabled to effect, and the gratitude which was poured into her ears from thousands of lips, never fostered self-esteem; but only impelled her heart to Him, who had supported and blessed her in her labours. She sought not her satisfaction in her life, but in the conscious enjoyment of Christ. "How little," she says, "can anything of mine give a moment's rest to a departing soul; so much sin and self mixing with the best, and always so short of what we owe!" She was thus gliding down the stream of time, with a firm reliance on Christ, and with a bright and beautiful hope, which gave a heavenly fervour to her soul, and wings to her renewed spirit. The glorious change had almost commenced here; for while her frame was fading, it was tinged with the beauty of her immortal life, and glowed with the expression of her gladdened soul.

About this time she received the intelligence of the death of the Rev. D. Rowlands, her Welsh coadjutor; and in a letter to his son dated Spafields, October 24th, 1790, she says, "How bitterly my tears have mixed with yours for your dear father! I never knew I loved and honoured him, as my grief for him makes me now feel and surely know how great and faithful a servant of God he was. Let me know all particulars of his sickness and death, and when, from this event, you may be at liberty for London. I cannot think you can hope to see me alive. I suffer night and day inexpressibly. All goes well here; and the great chapel (Sion) only waits opening for the various ministers' arrival by the third Sunday in November, or any other. All that is kind to dear Mrs. Rowlands. I am so low, about your father, united with my other misery, that you must take this as the best testimony I can give to a friend I so faithfully and affectionately love and honour."

Towards the close of November, 1790, the Countess broke a blood vessel, which was the commencement of her last illness. She, however, still managed her affairs, with the assistance of Lady Erskine, and her secretary, Mr. Best; and until her debility became too great, she wrote to her friends, and carried on her accustomed correspondence. Her congregations were uppermost in her thoughts; she called the members of her societies her dear children, and often expressed how much she cared for their souls. Her strength, however, every week became more feeble; and a complication of disorders, and much suffering, almost crushed her frame. She manifested the greatest patience and resignation, and said to Lady Ann, "All the little ruffles and difficulties which surrounded me, and all the pains I am exercised with in this poor body, through mercy affect not the settled peace and joy of my soul." Death had no repulsive aspect in her eyes, for she regarded it but "as the putting off of her cloak;" and when Lady Ann once asked her how she was, she exclaimed, "I am well. All is well—well for ever. I see, wherever I turn my eyes, whether I live or die, nothing but victory." She looked forward to her end with joyful anticipation, and said, "I know that *then* my capacity will be enlarged; but I am *now* as sensible of the presence of God, as I am of the presence of those I have with me." This hallowed feeling she had long enjoyed; and a few days before she took to her bed, she remarked, "The Lord hath been present with my spirit this morning in a remarkable manner; what he means to convey to my mind, I know not; it may be my approaching departure; my soul is filled with glory; I am as if in the element of heaven itself."

On the 12th day of June, 1791, a change passed over the Countess, which indicated to her physician the symptoms of approaching death. Her friends watched over her with unceasing solicitude, and lingered in her chamber, as if unwilling to lose one moment of her society. She said to Lady Ann, and Miss Scutt, who had been long and sincerely attached to her, "I fear I shall be the death of you both; it will be but a few days more." Her Ladyship was exceedingly cheerful and animated, and conversed with her friends with great energy till she was obliged to cease from exhaustion. She desired to be informed how the work of the Lord was prospering, and what new fields were opening. For some time she had contemplated a mission to Otaheite, in the South Seas, and had instructed Dr. Haweis to arrange that two missionaries should be sent out. This formed the subject of conversation when he visited her in her illness; but he prevailed upon her not to talk about it then, as she was exhausted, and said, "To-morrow your Ladyship shall hear what can be done." The next day she was informed of the difficulties which were raised, and that the two missionaries would not depart without episcopal ordination, which was denied them. She exclaimed, "We shall find others, I doubt not; and ordered her secretary to write, and request two students, who had expressed their willingness to undertake the work, to come to town immediately.*

While the days and nights of pain rolled round, Lady Huntingdon enjoyed a season of meditation, prayer, and holy joy. Her hope shone, like the evening star, and cast its radiancy far into the darkness of the grave. It was fixed on the cross; and she often said, "I have no hope but that which inspired the dying malefactor at the side of my Lord; and I must be saved in the same way, as freely, as fully, or not at all." As her life gently waned, she said with great emphasis, "The coming of the Lord draweth nigh! O, Lady Ann, the coming of the Lord draweth nigh! The thought fills my soul with joy unspeakable; whether I shall see his glory more abundantly appear, or whether it be an intimation of my own departure to him." She often repeated, "I long to be at home! My work is done! I have nothing to do but to go to my heavenly Father." Yet while she remained here, her heart was deeply interested in her work; and only an hour before she died, having written to the Rev. T. Charles, of Bala, to supply Spafields chapel, she asked Lady Ann, "Is Charles' letter come?" On being informed that it was, she requested that it might be opened immediately; and when Lady Ann said she would go and open it, the Countess replied, "To know if he comes, that's the point." So anxiously was she still concerned for the prosperity of the work of the Lord.

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* When the first missionaries, sent out by the London Society to Otaheite in 1798, were about to embark, a hackney coach was called to convey them to the vessel, which was immediately discovered to be Lady Huntingdon's old carriage.

A little before she died, she frequently said, "I shall go to my Father to-night;" and musingly repeated, "Can he forget to be gracious? Is there any end of his loving-kindness?" Her physician visited her between four and five; and shortly after, her strength suddenly failed, and she appeared to sink into a sleep. A friend, who was waiting below, was summoned to her chamber. He took her hand—it was cold and clammy; he felt her pulse—it was ceasing to beat; and as he leaned over her, she breathed her last breath, and fell asleep in Jesus. She died at her house in Spafields, adjoining her chapel, June 17th, 1791, in the eighty-fourth year of her age, and was interred in the family-vault, at Ashby-de-la-Zouch.

The tidings of her decease instantly cast a gloom over the metropolis; and as they rolled, like dark clouds throughout Great Britain, plunged thousands into grief and sadness. Her congregations, amounting to more than one hundred thousand persons, mourned over the loss they had sustained; her principal chapels were hung with black; and not only her own ministers, but many in the Establishment, and among the Nonconformists, preached a funeral sermon in honour of her character, and to testify to her worth. Tears fell like copious showers, at the mention of her name; a medal was struck off as a memento of her death;* her well-known features were embalmed in the memory of her people; and her deeds were gratefully spoken of by those who had been blessed by her exertions. She lived to serve her Master, and evangelize the world; she girded on the gospel-armour, and went forth to battle with ignorance, error, and vice; she trampled under her feet the charms of wealth and noble birth, and bore with meekness the scorn and opposition of the world; she grasped the standard of the cross with a mighty hand, rallied her followers, and uttered her cry, "Excelsior;" she beheld mighty champions cut down at her side, and many deserting the battle-field;—but she remained, "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might;" died nobly in the midst of her efforts, worn out with care and ceaseless watching over the spiritual condition of others; and entered into the land "where the weary are at rest."

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* One of these medals was found in a field near Bodmin. On one side is a likeness of her Ladyship, inscribed "Selina, Countess Dowager of Huntingdon;" and on the reverse side, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and at the foot, "Died 17 June, 1791," with her age.

Lady Huntingdon was a wonderful woman in an age fertile with illustrious characters. Many displayed more sparkling genius, wit and talents than she did; many exhibited feats of heroism which will encircle their names with unrivalled glory; but none mingled so many excellent features in their characters as did the Countess of Huntingdon. Descended from an ancient and honourable house; endowed with talents and accomplishments, which added lustre to an illustrious court; allied to a nobleman of great personal merit, and of renowned ancestry; and possessed of everything esteemed in the present life;—Lady Huntingdon might have shone in the gay and fashionable society of her times, and have secured for herself a niche in the great temple of literature, or of fashion. But what things were gain to her she counted loss for Christ. She valued all her exterior advantages, only for the influence they enabled her to exert; she gave up the blaze of rank, for the attractions of poverty and woe; she forsook the splendid court, to teach in the wretched hovel; and deemed it a greater honour to be permitted to induce the sinner to bow before Jesus, than to attract a crowd of noble flatterers, and rule them by her charms. She sacrificed all for Christ;

devoted herself, her time, property, influence, and talents to the cause of religion; and presented to the world an example of what one pious woman can do to benefit man, and glorify God.

Lady Huntingdon possessed great natural talents. Her intimate associates were persons of ability, and distinguished reputation. Lord Chesterfield was the model of an *accomplished* man; yet her Ladyship's society was much courted by him. Lord Bolingbroke was deeply read in polite literature, and in scientific and theological works; yet he listened with enthusiasm to the conversation of the Countess. The celebrated ladies, who ruled the court, and drew the flower of the nobility to their feet, condescended to notice only persons of superior talents; yet even on these her Ladyship exerted a powerful influence. Throughout life, she commanded, by her abilities, the respect and confidence of acknowledged great men, who often solicited her advice, and submitted to her guidance. Her mind was quick, comprehensive, and firm; her will resolute and determined; her faith simple and enduring; and her energy vast and untiring. She possessed much natural sweetness and amiability of character, which the gospel ripened into a holy and heavenly spirit; and her manners were exceedingly elegant, and engaging. As a wife, she was an example to a corrupt and licentious age; as a mother, she was devoted to her children, and ruled them in the fear of the Lord; as a friend, she was sincere and attached, generous and obliging. Her conversational powers were remarkable. There was scarcely a topic on which she could not converse with freedom and accuracy; and on all theological subjects, she discoursed like an able divine. She argued with the sceptic, expostulated with the sinner, and enlightened the believer. Fletcher calls her "a prodigy;" and many instances are recorded of the usefulness of her talk. On one occasion, Whitefield's brother called on her. He was then sinking into the grave, and almost despairing of mercy. "I am a lost man," he cried, "there is no hope for me." She replied in a firm tone, "I am glad you feel you are lost, for Jesus Christ seeks and saves the *lost*. What makes you despair should, therefore, inspire you with confidence; go to him as a *lost* sinner, and he will save you." This short conversation was blessed to him; and he died in the hope of a joyful immortality.

Lady Huntingdon possessed an exceedingly generous disposition. She sympathised with human misery in all its varied forms, and, to the utmost of her ability, relieved it. Her liberality, however, was chiefly devoted to the cause of religion; and in the course of her long life, she expended about *one hundred thousand pounds* for religious purposes. She lived in a homely manner, and reduced her personal expenses to the lowest sum that she might be able to devote more to the service of Christ. One of her ministers once called on her Ladyship with a wealthy person from the country. When they came out of her house, he exclaimed, "What a lesson! Can a person of her noble birth, nursed in the lap of grandeur, live in such a house, so meanly furnished; and shall I, a tradesman, be surrounded with luxury and elegance? From this moment, I shall hate my house, my furniture, and myself, for spending so little for God, and so much in folly."

The Countess exhibited the simplicity and grandeur of Christian character. Religion, with her, was not a creed, nor an ecclesiastical position; but a living power. It had its seat in her heart; and gave warmth to her feelings, clearness to her views of truth, and strength to her faith. She was clothed with humility; and always spoke of herself as a worm in the sight of God. She admired consistency, and beautifully exemplified it in her life. Her sympathies were most tender and powerful; and her catholicity of spirit won the admiration of the good and great among all classes of Christians. She loved the whole world, and desired to send the gospel to every part of it. Her faith was as simple and confiding as a child's, and sustained her throughout her arduous career; and her early conflicts gave such solidity and strength to it, that, when once she was persuaded she was walking in the right path, no opposition, nor dangers could turn her aside, or disturb the serenity of her soul. She lived in heaven, while she laboured on earth. Her life was one constant communion with God; prayer was the language of her soul; her heart was ever breathing out petitions; and she never undertook any thing without specially beseeching the blessing of heaven.

It must not, however, be supposed that Lady Huntingdon was perfect. She had her frailties, as well as her virtues; which are sufficient to remind us that she was mortal. She appears to have been sometimes irritable, and imperious, and to have manifested an unforgiving spirit toward those who had offended her. There can be no doubt she met with much to harass and distress her, arising from her own indispositions, and the malice of her foes. She was herself exceedingly earnest and zealous; and, in the warmth of her ardour, was led to regard some persons in an unfavourable light, and to listen too eagerly to the insinuations of crafty persons. She, however, was aware of her failings, and often bitterly deplored them. In the course of her extended career, she had seen such hypocrisy and baseness, and had been sometimes so imposed upon, that it naturally made her vigilant, and, perhaps, suspicious.

No one can consider the activity and perseverance of the Countess, without a feeling of wonder and admiration. She was always working; far more laboriously than if her daily bread depended on her exertions. Her journeys, in that age of travelling, alone would have worn out many a stronger frame; her correspondence, if it could be collected, would outrival Whitefield's, or Horace Walpole's; and her constant planning and solicitude would have crushed a feebler spirit. She was never satisfied with what she was, or what she had done; she studied, prayed, and conversed that she might obtain clearer apprehensions of divine truth; she pressed forward in her work in spite of sickness, opposition, and difficulties; and she staid not her chariot-wheels, till her Master whispered to her from above, and called her to another and a better sphere.

Yes! Lady Huntingdon was a noble character, and will ever be numbered among the chief actors in the reformation of the eighteenth century.

She found England sunk to a large extent, in ignorance and depravity, which among the lower orders might be called brutality. Spiritual slumber, worldliness, and error had fearfully invaded the Church, both ministers and people. But what could a woman, though in her commanding position, effect? In addition to her personal exhortations and prayers, which knew no remission, she gathered around her a band of devoted and eloquent men, who, under her patronage and counsels, traversed the three Kingdoms, lighting everywhere the torch of evangelical religion, and rousing the careless by the gospel call; which sounded to their unaccustomed ears as if it had come from Heaven.

"Irregular," as towards the national Church, she doubtless was upon compulsion of its oppressive rulers, but it was no less the church of her judgment, and of her affections, and let those answer for it who laid such necessity upon her to be "irregular" toward the church which she loved, at the bidding of those who loved it not. And let not the theorists of a later day, pronounce lightly upon her conduct in doing as she did, rather than disregard what seemed to her a wide and effectual door, opened by Providence before her, and the call to lead through it a multitude of souls into the kingdom of heaven.

Before she left the world, she had the satisfaction of seeing a blessed revival of religion in the established and non-conforming churches. Her College was supplying a race of evangelical ministers, and one hundred thousand persons were statedly hearing the gospel in her own chapels. She ceased from her labours, but her work still lives and honours her; and when, in future years, the impartial historian narrates the glorious reformations which have revived the Christian Church, he will associate with the honoured names of the mighty Reformers, the name of this illustrious Lady; and displaying her private virtues, and her public acts, bid the world admire the character, and follow the example of SELINA, COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON.

"IN VERITATE VICTORIA."

APPENDIX.

THE following letters were received too late for insertion in their proper place. They are addressed to Miss Mary Bateman, who was for some years a companion of Lady Huntingdon. Her father was very much opposed to the Methodists; and finding that his daughter was in the habit of hearing Whitefield, he sternly threatened to disinherit her if she continued to do so. She could not give up her privileges; her father, therefore, opened the door, gave her a shilling, and drove her from his house. The Countess heard of his unfeeling conduct, and offered the young lady an asylum in her mansion; and she remained with her ladyship, till her father's death, when she again resided with her mother. In the spring of 1762, Lady Huntingdon lived in New Norfolk-Street, Grosvenor Square, where her daughter, Lady Selina, was seized with a fever. Miss Bateman was also attacked with it; and her ladyship then wrote the following letter to her.

"Friday Afternoon, April 30th, 1762.

My Dear Bateman,—I long to come and see you, but the doctor thinks there may be danger of bringing additional infection to Lady Selina; and should she have a relapse of the fever, with eruption, in her weak state, it might be of bad consequence. In this situation of mine, I am sure you would not wish to see me; but if you at any time should, I will come the last thing at night, and then I think no danger can arise from it. You must know that you command from my heart all that can be done; and the doctor assures me you have not one symptom that is in the least to be feared. May our dear Lord bless your heart with such a measure of joy, peace, quiet, and assurance, as may cause you to repose in confidence all your cares upon his tender bosom. I am truly anxious for your real peace and health; but *for* all, and *in* all, I I commend you to him who is the friend that fails not, and who will be found yours and mine eternally. Ever, ever, your affectionate and faithful friend,

S. HUNTINGDON.

P. S. Let me know if you want anything, and if you would have me send to let your mother know."

The second letter refers to the erection of her chapel at Bath, (see p. 227,) and to the disposal of her jewels, (see p. 190.)

"My Dear Bateman,—I have taken the resolution to stay this summer in this part of the world, and hope you will come and see me while I am at Bath. Mrs. Davies' house I am in full possession of on Monday next, and shall have a room for you; I hope your mother will be so kind as not to be against your coming. Before you come down, I shall be glad to know what Mr. Romaine will do about Brighton, and if he intends being there. I have written to Mrs. Madan, but have had no answer. I purpose to write this post, and also to Mr. Berridge, that I may be sure they are well supplied. I find such a backwardness in all our fine clergy in preaching the gospel, that I really know not what to make of it; but I believe it has a great lesson which I am to attend to—that the Lord himself will be my Shepherd, that I may lack nothing. I believe this whole affair of the chapel here has the marks of his hand, as evidently as it is possible for them to appear in any human work. I have not had one line from any quarter to approve or rejoice in the matter, the whole lies between my heart and himself; and in blessing he will bless it, and in multiplying he will multiply; and this is my joy. An uncommon blessing attended the laying the first stone; and Moravians, and others, were all peculiarly sensible of it. That all throughout the whole of this business, the Lord has been his own witness, bows my heart before him to give him all the praise, and all the glory; that no man's hand is in it, is no small matter of thanks to me. My soul designs to trust him alone, for and in all things. He is full and sufficient for all purposes, both in heaven and earth. I find it a hard lesson; but I am sure it is the best lesson he means to make his creature perfect and clear in.

I have ordered a stone with 'M. B.' upon it, which you are to pay for. I have ordered it to be placed at the other corner of the foundation, and to be the principal stone on the left hand of the building, as mine is on the right. This, your dear heart seemed to wish, so that a share in the blessing that followed the undertaking might be your portion; and this *my* heart as much desires for you as your own can do.

My love to your mother, and Mrs. Jones. When you see poor Kitty,* tell her I remember her in love. I hope you will see dear Mrs. Carteret, and Mrs. Cavendish before you come away; and do ask Briscoe if he will take the jewels at the price. Tell him, as I have not been in town since, that they are sealed up, and as he left them, and that I am willing to part with them. Mrs. Carteret has the key, and Mr. Hastings, of Queen Ann's Street, will go for them. Ever affectionately yours,

S. HUNTINGDON."

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* Formerly Miss Bateman's servant. Miss Bateman married, in 1765, Mr. Adams, of Ashby, an intimate friend of Lady Huntingdon; and her daughter, Jane, married the Rev. R. Housman, "the Evangelist of Lancaster."

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